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- RELATIONSHIPS IN LIFE -

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RELATIONSHIPS IN LIFE

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ATTITUDES AND RELATIONSHIPS

By

R. T. Williams, D. D.

Author of
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Relationships in Life

CHAPTER ONE

PERSONALITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

The study of values constitutes the very heart of philosophy. The world's best thinkers, regardless of their particular school of philosophic thought, must and do give consideration to values. This attention might be incidental or fundamental, temporary or permanent, secondary or primary. No process of reasoning is able to ignore them. Their consideration should not only challenge the attention of the scholar, but also that of every person, because values enter into the details of every life—the choices, the decisions and the activities. In other words, we are all dealing with values, whether or not we realize it. The ultimate success or failure of any person, or group of people, whether it be a family, a church, or a nation, will be determined by its definition of and its emphasis upon values. For values determine what shall be first and what subordinate.

Of all values, and there are many, personality alone is intrinsic and supreme. By intrinsic, we mean a value that is inherent in the thing itself, regardless of situations, conditions, or circumstances. Such value is found in personality, but nowhere else. It is often claimed that certain objects, such as gold or silver, have intrinsic value, that is, value within themselves. This claim cannot be substantiated by any process of reasoning.

Personality is not only intrinsic in value, but it is supreme. All else becomes mere trash in comparison. It

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is the measure by which all other values are judged. Gold is a standard of values in the world of commerce and economics, but gold must be judged in its relation to personality. The automobile, farm land, houses, clothing, animals, are estimated in terms of gold for finding their worth in the realm of economics. But these in turn only find value from the perspective of personality.

Upon a certain occasion a young man asked me this question: "What is the determining factor in my life?" I replied, "The one thing that will do more than all else in determining your future, young man, is your ability to distinguish between what is important and what is not." This was another way of stating the fact that values must be defined, classified, related, and properly emphasized. Consider the answer. Success or failure depends upon one's ability and willingness to distinguish between the things that are important and the things that are not, or to properly relate values and emphasize them. Good men, men with unimpeachable motives and character, may spend their lives running after imaginary values, seeing visionary things, emphasizing a mirage instead of a real oasis. They often set up straw men to fight, using up their energies and spending their priceless time without getting anywhere or accomplishing anything worth while.

The beautiful Atalanta is described by legend as an example of one who turns aside to look at secondary things, forgetting the supreme goal and losing it. Her competitor running by her side dropped an apple of gold in front of her. Its beauty attracted her attention, and she hesitated, then picked it up, thinking she could easily

recover the loss in her speed, but these precious moments lost in picking up golden apples cost her the race and the honor she might have won. Who has not seen such a tragedy repeated in many a life? How many have turned aside for a moment from important things to trifle with secondary values and have reaped dishonor and tragedy as the fruit of their folly?

Rarely is a life determined by a single act. However, the general trends and tendencies of one's life furnish good grounds for accurate analysis. One's desires, words, acts, tendencies; the general trend of one's life, both public and private, are indications of the inner manhood. What does a certain individual cherish? What does he love? What does he evaluate as of greatest worth? What does he emphasize? What does he consider as primary, or secondary? Does he put personality first in all his considerations, subjecting everything else to it, or does he overlook the most valuable thing known, personality, and spend his life chasing after secondary things? Will a business man pile up profits for himself by sacrificing the health and happiness of his employees, subjecting them to the rigors of poverty while he and his family live in the lap of luxury? Will a manufacturer of guns and ammunition encourage war just to open new markets for his merchandise of death? What does he consider important, money or men?

Here is a test of moral principle and of intelligence as well. The highest moral test and the surest proof of intelligence is found in one's decision to place personality in a position of supremacy. To subject personality to the indignity of subordination to anything aside from a

higher Personality is a reflection upon one's moral integrity and intelligence. This may seem rather harsh; nevertheless, it is true. The summation of any life is here: did that life put personality first and make it supreme or was personality subjected to something lower in the scale of real worth?

Values naturally fall into two classes, namely, means and ends. Every value is either a means or an end or it is an end within itself. All values must be thus classified, being placed in the list of means, or of ends. Which? Let it be stated here, emphatically, that there is but one value that can possibly be an end. That is personality. Personality is the only thing that is *intrinsic*, that is *supreme*, and that is an *end*. All other values are *means* to an end, and are therefore secondary and always instrumental. To accept this viewpoint of life will settle full many a problem. This position will stand the test of logic, and will always be upheld by the Word of God. To miss this truth is to wander aimlessly in the fogs of mental and spiritual confusion. To accept it is to find chart and compass for the trip through life and to a harbor of success and peace. Personality is the end of life. Things are the means to the end.

Thus, all things, excepting personality, find their value in relationships, and there only. Things, as such, are purely instrumental—means to an end and never the end itself. Things are valuable therefore to the degree in which they promote and serve personality. This reasoning does not seek to make personality exclusive and selfish, but social, for each person is related to the social group and must make a contribution to the general good.

Each person is interlocked with society. One generally retains a measure of individuality, yet one is dependent upon the social order, both from the standpoint of his own development and the investment of his talents.

In the light of these facts, personality explains the reason and logic of the universe. It is an explanation so rich, full, and satisfactory as to make all others unnecessary. The order, the progress, and the climax of divine creation substantiate this fact. We would not take time to consider the order or the progress here as it would not serve an important purpose in this discussion, but the climax should not be overlooked. God had reached the most important moment in His scheme of creation. He was about to create the greatest thing He had ever created, and possibly the greatest object He could ever create. He cannot use a standard and pattern greater than Himself. "Let us make man in our own image"—What a statement! In His own image He created man. This is a climax in divine thought and achievement. No wonder a great speaker and writer has proclaimed God as "the adventurous God." In creating man, He takes a supreme chance. He becomes "*the* great adventurer." What a chance! What a risk! He is making a being that has the power to love God or to hate Him, to serve or to defy Him, both as to His will and as to His sovereignty.

This act of God's explains all that had taken place under His creative skill. Why light and beauty without a human eye to see them? Why air without human lungs to breathe the oxygen? Why fill the heavens with music and the universe with harmony without a human ear to hear them? Why provide food so lavishly and bountifully

with no human stomach to digest it? Why land and water, air, vegetation, animal life, the mineral kingdom, without a human being to utilize and enjoy them? What is the logical explanation of these—the very universe itself? The answer is, man. He is the logical explanation. The explanation is personality. This is the end, and all else the means. God is necessary to explain man, and man is necessary to explain things.

Those things which we pursue and for which we struggle are within themselves useless and meaningless without personality. For example, take a home. It may be handsomely built, and luxuriously furnished with rugs, carpets, tapestry, sterling silver, cut glass, fine linen, comfortable beds and every other appointment that could go into the equipment of a modern home, but without the presence of human beings with their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, working out destiny in the home circle it is not a home.

Any home, whether magnificent or humble, is glorified and dignified by the presence of living human beings who can utilize it and give to it real and worth while value. The house finds its value, not in the expensiveness of its material or its appointments and equipment, but its value is found in the contribution it can make toward the happiness of living personalities. Relationships to personality determine its value.

This process of reasoning is easily applicable to money. In fact the implications are inescapable. All people are interested, more or less, in this material substance called money, for it is interlocked with all the interests of life. Money has been defined as a means of exchange or a re-

ceipt of wealth. Is money valuable? If so, how and why? Yes, money has value and is necessary in world affairs as now carried on. But it has secondary value only. That is, money has value because it can be made to serve a human need. This is all that can be said for it. But this is enough. Money, as such, either metal or currency, has no intrinsic worth. It is not valuable within itself. It is valuable to the degree in which it can be made to serve the needs of personality.

Much has been spoken and written about tainted money, sacred money, good money, bad money. But there is no thought of attributing moral quality to money. Everyone knows that money is neither good nor bad; that it has no moral quality. There is no such thing as tainted money; nor is there such a thing as holy money. Moral quality does not lie within the money, but resides in the agent who handles, possesses, uses, or desires it. The relationship that exists between the money and the agent determines the moral quality.

Thus, money is neither a blessing nor a curse, but the use to which it is put, and the relationship it bears to personality, make it a blessing or a curse to the world. It can be transformed into either, all depending upon the relationship between it and the agent possessing, using or desiring it.

This same reasoning can be carried into the realm of education. This may be somewhat startling to some, inasmuch as education seems to have been considered as something of abstract value or worth. However, this cannot be true. Education must be weighed in the balances of usefulness. It is not an abstraction, an entity or an

independent substance. Like everything else it is related to personality and inseparably so. Its realm is not absolute. It is instrumental in serving as a means of enriching personality.

Education is an impartation and a development. It is an impartation of knowledge, also a development of personality. Its aim is to serve for the good of the one receiving it and to make a contribution to human society. Within itself it is of no value, but related to the possessor and to society its value is incalculable. It cannot be computed in terms of gold or diamonds, but it finds its value in the balances of human personality, in which scales all things are weighed. Culture, art, music, history, and the ability to read and interpret the language of the races are priceless assets when related to human needs and service with right moral motives. Unrelated to human needs, or wrongly related, these things are useless or may even be harmful.

The effect of education upon human society after the spending of billions of dollars within the past few years has been very disappointing. Has education failed? In general it has. But that education has not failed which has been backed by the right moral motives. If education is imparted or sought for the purpose of lifting an individual or a group of individuals above another group; if through superior mental equipment one oppresses those not so fortunate as to be educated, then education fails and even becomes a menace to society. What is the weakness of our modern education? The answer is, "Lack of moral motive," or rather, lack of right relationship with personality.

Here we would like to raise a question. It is in the mind of every thinking person; it has often been asked, and is still being asked: "What is wrong with the world?" Something is wrong. What is it? Why is there so much filth in the world, in the presence of such abundant means of cleansing and salvation? Why is there so much unrest and unhappiness in the presence of such possibilities of peace, prosperity and happiness? Why such poverty and suffering in the midst of abundance? Why so much death while life is offered without money and without price? What is the trouble? Why the decay of authority, the dissolution, the distress so apparent everywhere? Why the general breakdown of our present political, economic and social order, all of which reflects tragedy and what is well-nigh a spiritual collapse throughout the civilized world? What is the cause and the cure for these conditions?

The present situation is not the only one of its kind ever experienced by the human race. It may be more wide spread and more intense but the same conditions have appeared to some extent in all generations. It is more or less a repetition of conditions that have obtained now and then to some degree for two thousand years.

Some are telling us that the cause of our trouble is superabundance of natural resources. They tell us we have too many bales of cotton, too many bushels of wheat, too much corn, too many fine cattle and fat hogs. The cure which they propose is to bring prosperity by destruction. Destroy our natural resources and spend our money extravagantly. That is the way to return to prosperity. If the cause of our trouble is abundance, then, destruction

should be the logical remedy. Do we need less of earth's products? Has nature been too lavish, too prodigal, in her offerings to human needs? Is there too much food as long as there is a hungry human being on earth? Is there too much clothing as long as children are cold and naked?

Some are telling us that our political and economic machinery is old and worn out, that we have outlived it, and should junk it and get new and better machinery for our present conditions. On the other hand, there is a cry that comes from some quarters for us to destroy the capitalistic system and then the millennium will immediately begin. They say we need a redistribution of our wealth that all may have plenty and none suffer. But, suppose they overthrow our capitalistic system, what shall we substitute? Suppose we pass from capitalism to communism? Will our ills be cured by wrecking the capitalistic machine, and would the machine substituted by communism bring peace and good will upon earth and prosperity to man?

In the midst of these conflicting opinions, it is timely to raise this question, "Is our trouble in the machine or in the agent operating the machine?" Does the machine need rebuilding or does the operator need transforming? A pick in the hands of one man is used to repair breaks in the streets, while the same tool in the hands of another man can be used to dig up and destroy the street. Which is more important, the pick or the man using it? Both are important, to be sure, but which one is of greater value and which is more dangerous? The same is true of a doctor. A surgeon can perform a more successful operation with a sharp knife than with a dull one, but any kind of

instrument is dangerous in the hands of an operator with a wrong motive. No tool or instrument can be made to serve a good end while in the hands of an unwise or immoral operator.

In political matters, is our trouble in the law or in the persons enforcing the law? Effort to enforce prohibition laws by wet courts is a mere pretense. Other law enforcement agencies, antagonistic in their hearts toward the law, stand as a true example of the futility of making a machine work satisfactorily when operated by agents whose motives are out of harmony with the objective for which that machine is made.

Human laws have never been so important as the men committed to the enforcement of such laws. Laws that govern the operation of banks do not furnish half the protection to depositors as the honesty of the banker himself. With a crooked banker money is unsafe, regardless of the laws governing the banking business. An honest banker can protect the people's money, and will, regardless of the laws under which he operates. Loopholes can be found in any law that exists, if one has a mind to be lawless.

Machines are instrumental and depend upon the agencies operating them for their efficiency and ultimate usefulness. Put all of our material resources, developed and undeveloped, into the channels which enrich personality, and they will be transformed from the worthless into assets of incalculable value.

While looking for causes and cures, we cannot do better than to consider the greatest teacher and leader that ever lived, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and friend of

man. He came to this world to reveal causes of breakdowns in human life and human society, and to present cures for the world's ills. We will do well not to overlook Him and His immutable principles. The Bible states that Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil. That must be something central, for Jesus never works marginally. What are the works of the devil? The saloon, the speakeasy, the gambling den, slavery, human injustice? Indirectly, "yes," but primarily, "no." These forms of evil are the indirect results of the work of the devil. The real works of Satan are in the hearts of men, and these evil hearts are manifested in the various ways mentioned above. Thus, the fundamental cause of vice is the work of Satan as found in the depravity of the personality. Thereupon, the personality or the heart itself must be changed.

To meet this need, Jesus came to take something out of the personality that is foreign and to put something into it that is vitally needed. This is central, basic, effective, and final. This will solve the problems of human society. Nothing else will or can. Jesus never came to rebuild the machines of humanity but to cure humanity itself—to transform the operator. Thus, the work of God is both direct and indirect, both central and marginal. It is both transforming and reforming. We do not need a political revolution that will destroy our present form of government, or an upheaval that would unsettle our entire economic and social structure, but we do need a transformation of the character of people and nation. We need a reformation that will change our whole viewpoint and trend of life.

We have been rushing toward materialism. Personality has been too largely overlooked in our present order of things, too much relegated and subordinated to cotton and corn, wheat and oats, hogs and cattle, stocks and bonds, and other forms of natural wealth. We need a new evaluation of redeemed personality. This would be accomplished by a swinging back to God and the Bible. No nation has ever succeeded without God and never will. History furnishes sufficient evidence of this truth. Give us religion, old-time religion, sweeping revivals of salvation in all of our churches and homes, transforming, sanctifying and filling with the Holy Ghost. This will save us. Disaster lies in the path of a people who forget God. For where God is forgotten, personality loses its intrinsic worth.

We once thought that man could be educated and this would solve our problem. But this theory is forever exploded by actual experiences and observations. No government can be reformed properly until its citizens have been transformed. There has been a theory that society makes the individual, also a theory that the individual makes society. Both theories are partially true for neither can be effective without the other. Society does help to make the individual, but is it not also true that the individual must make society? No group is stronger than the individual units making up that group. A strong family could not be made or formed by organizing a company of morons or imbeciles. The strength of a family consists, not only in its organization, but also in the character of the individuals constituting that family organization.

We have found that our need is deeper than education for out of the heart are the issues of life, not out of the head. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." "He that hateth his brother is a murderer." "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Jesus Christ was more than a reformer. He was a transformer. He never worked on the margin of a life but spent His time at the center of affections, in the will, in the conscience, in the moral consciousness, in the character of the individual. When once He has corrected the man He has corrected at the same time the life of the man. Transformation results in reformation and makes reformation not only certain but permanent. On the other hand, we reform the machinery of the world and try to correct the conduct of man without changing his motives. This method will result in no permanent cure of the world's ills.

It is obvious that education is instrumental but it has no intrinsic worth. It is useful only as it can contribute to the happiness of individuals. The same can be said of health. Health in itself is not an end to be sought, but a means to an end. If a man seeks to live to be one hundred years old, that in itself would not necessarily be any great accomplishment for it is not the length of life that counts but the quality of life. A man might live a great many years and yet not live a big, full, rich, wholesome life. The effort to add years to life may be a worth while objective, but to add life to years is worth far more.

A proper estimate of human personality manifests itself in a right attitude toward life and its problems. But

since personality has been debased wrong attitudes predominate. Thus, wrong attitudes and wrong relations lie at the root of the world's trouble. This condition reflects itself in every phase and department of life, social, financial, educational, religious. Herein lies our personal responsibility, for we have the power to correct our attitudes and our relationships. A right attitude toward sin will solve the sin question. A right attitude toward holiness will lead us into a positive experience and life of holiness. A right attitude toward God will bring us into right relationship with Him. Right attitudes and right relationships will help to place our feet in the paths of prosperity.

Life is a series of adjustments. From the hour we arrive in this world to the time of our departure in death we must meet situations, make changes and adjustments. The rich man is called upon to adjust himself to his riches; the poor man to his poverty; the sick man to his suffering; the young person to his youth, and the elderly man to his age. Everything that ought to be improved and can be improved should be improved. What cannot be changed must be endured. Our attitude is the magic wand that transforms the unlovely into beauty and wealth.

Attitude means everything. The dictionary defines it as posture, as position, also as inner feeling. Attitude is not to be thought of as something static, fatalistic or dead, without power to react and respond. Attitude may take a stand and become fixed, or it may be very active, responsive. It is both negative and positive. It can say "No," on the one hand, or on the other hand it can say "Yes," with equal effectiveness. Attitude must be thought of as

something effective, dynamic and creative. It is more than a dead statue erected as a monument to a hero or to some historical event. It is like a living man, thinking, choosing, creating.

Attitude has many important implications. The first, we would mention is endurance. There are many things in life that can be remedied and should be, but there are others that cannot be remedied and consequently must be gracefully endured. For example, in a financial crash a man loses his property and the savings that he has laid up against a rainy day. Or, the rainy day has come entirely too soon. What shall he do? Lose his poise? Go to pieces? Commit suicide? No, these are foolish considerations. He must endure the situation and make the best of it. A right attitude toward adversity results in endurance.

Attitude does not stop with endurance. Otherwise it would be fatalism, or possibly asceticism, which is a process of crushing desires and appetites. This would not be life at its highest and best but at its lowest and worst. Attitude does endure, but it also makes its adversity an instrument for good. Indeed fortunate is the person who can pass through this life with its thorns and rocky roads, with its steep mountains, and with its hot deserts, with its disease and changing fortunes, without getting wounded, bruised, sick or disapproved. Few, if any, do.

Every heart may expect some wounds—wounds that are not always the fruit of his own doing, but often the result of unkind acts of others, or of misfortunes for which no one seems directly responsible. It might be the

loss of wife or of a child. The heart is left crushed and bleeding. Can it be healed? Yes, there is healing for the wounds of humanity. They are healed in two ways: First with time. Time is a great healer. Possibly ninety per cent of all of our problems would adjust themselves if left to time. But often our impatience forbids this and we demand an immediate solution. We rush into situations that not only fail to help us but actually complicate the problems we already have. Our second state is consequently worse than the first.

The other method is by the grace which God imparts. His own grace is sufficient. Thus every problem is solved by time and grace. Not by time without grace nor grace without time. Both of these elements are made possible by endurance upon our part. God makes it possible to endure by giving us grace until the wound can be healed. Thus the value of attitude with its implication of endurance.

Attitude is a creative force, always active, positive, dynamic. The good soldier must endure hardness, but it is not enough merely to endure, to suffer, to bare his breast to the fire of the enemy. He must fight. Fighting makes endurance the easier. To stand forever and do nothing would break the nerve of the bravest man. Action is a part of life. We can endure, but not for long, without action.

Here is a man held in the grip of poverty. Can he endure it? Yes, and he must endure it. But he cannot stop there. He must fight to extricate himself from the deadly grasp of poverty. The very fact that he is strug-

gling to overcome his poverty makes it easier to endure and protect his manhood in the midst of the struggle.

Certainly attitude implies endurance, but it also implies fight, effort, action, energy. Bunyan endured the dungeon, but he also worked in the dim light of his cell writing "Pilgrim's Progress." John Milton endured his blindness, but toiled on day after day to give us "Paradise Lost." Daniel in the lions' den endured the unpleasantness of his surroundings. The Hebrew children in the furnace of fire endured their humiliation but they also prayed and stood actively for God and right. They endured, but they were also very positive and active in their attitude. Thus, proper attitude enables them to transform their burdens into benefits.

Another implication of attitude is receptivity or appreciativeness or hospitality. Unappreciativeness is a crime; appreciativeness is a virtue. Inhospitality implies a closed mind, a closed heart. Hospitality implies an open mind and an open heart. Hospitality is a never failing road to manhood and happiness. One of the high crimes against God and His divine love is inhospitality on the part of the human race. When Jesus Christ came to the world to redeem it, He found the human race against Him. There was no room for Him even in the inn. He was born in a manger in the presence of dumb brutes. "He came to his own and his own received him not." They were inhospitable.

Think of the tragedy of a mind closed against truth, a heart closed against love, a life closed against friendship. Tragedy? Yes, a tragedy, but a common tragedy. We are so busy we do not have time for the song of the

bird, the ripple of the brook, the glory of the stars. No time for music, for art, for song, for meditation, for prayer, for divine worship. Too busy to think of God. What shall I do with Jesus? Shall I give Him a place in my thinking? Shall I give Him a place in my home? Shall I give Him a place in my business? Shall I give Him a place in my heart? Shall I let Him in? Or, shall I shut Him out? What shall be my attitude? Shall it be one of receptivity or of inhospitality?

Life must have hospitality or appreciativeness. That is necessary for right attitude. Right attitude is always ready to receive; that is, to receive the thing that is right, but is equally determined to reject the thing that is wrong.

Blessed is the man to whom nature can speak, to whom the stars can whisper in the quiet hours of the night, to whom God can send His Spirit without being insulted, the man who is always hospitable in his attitude. He may be poor in earthly goods, but he will be rich in mind and heart toward God. Happiness will always be his possession.

There is at least one more implication of right attitude which should not be overlooked, namely, giving. Without this life is meager, poor, miserly. There is a stairway, they tell us, that slopes from darkness to light, from poverty to riches, from sin to God. Man finds that stairway when he consents to be a giver as well as a receiver. We have stated that life has two sides, the receiving and the giving. Jesus mentions both in that terse statement, "It is more blessed to give than it is to receive." Both are blessed, but one more than the other.

Men rise to their highest glory when they give—when they give their money, their talents and their time, their affections and their service—themselves.

God is the greatest giver in all the universe. He stands out as the true example. He gave His best, what He could not do without. He gave His own Son. For what? For others. This is God's attitude. I am not surprised that God is a great giver. He could not be God and be otherwise. I am not surprised at the miracles of Jesus Christ. I would be more surprised if He had not performed miracles, for He himself is a greater miracle than anything He has ever done. Miracles do not stagger me, but the absence of miracles from the presence of Jesus Christ would be an inexplicable mystery.

Those people whose memory never dies are those who gave themselves to others. They had a right attitude and the result is immortality. They endured, they achieved, they received and they gave. Attitude implies all of these facts. Fathers and mothers endure much for their children. They also achieve much in their behalf. They receive their children with open arms and with deep affection and they give to their children all they have. They give their time, their energy, they give life itself for their families. In this they rise into the realms of the highest philosophy known to man. They save others, but themselves they cannot save.

The effects of right attitude produce practical results. First, it admits the problems of life. This is important. No man is qualified to deal with a problem until he admits the existence of the problem. The problem must first be

seen. Secondly, attitude not only recognizes the problem but also deals with it.

All can see the presence of evil in the world, the suffering, the misery, the poverty, but the amount of suffering and the amount of poverty, and the distribution of them are indeed baffling. Why is there any suffering at all? This is a difficult question. But why so much suffering? Why the unequal distribution of suffering? We know poverty is here, that sickness, and disappointment, and tragedy all abound, but they do not seem to be evenly distributed. We see the problem, but what is the solution? Certainly we can reduce poverty, and reduce suffering, and reduce sickness, and reduce the number of tragedies, and reduce disappointment. Yes, this is a challenge and it should be bravely met, but that is not final. A big part of the problem is still unsolved. What shall we do about that part that we cannot eliminate? We should eliminate all the misery in life that can be eliminated. What cannot be eliminated must be met and endured with a proper attitude.

Finally, a right attitude enables one to formulate right relationships. In the final analysis, life is made up of relationships. They fall naturally and necessarily into three classes, namely: relationship with things, with people, and with God. It is impossible to live in this world without contact with things. It is also impossible to live normally in this world without contact with people, and certainly no one should want to live without contact with God. My entire destiny here and hereafter will be predicated upon these three relationships. If I properly relate myself with things, I will take a long step toward happi-

ness and proper destiny. If I relate myself properly to people I will take a second step in the same direction. If I relate myself properly with God, I will rise to the highest possibilities of time and eternity. My attitude will determine these relationships. In the following chapters it is our purpose to emphasize these three relationships, namely: with things, with people, and with God.

CHAPTER TWO

RELATIONSHIP WITH THINGS

Man is a physical being, living in a physical environment. He is also spiritual. His dual nature, physical and spiritual, relates him definitely with two worlds, one through the body and the other through the soul. His nature demands both sets of relationships. Man is, or should be, supreme in his environment, having dominion, divinely given, over all other forms of created life. He is endowed with power to grapple with inanimate physical forces, overcoming and utilizing them. He is also a moral being, with power of choice in the presence of right and wrong. His surroundings have no moral quality. Moral quality lies within him, in his attitudes to and relationships with things about him. God ordered man to have dominion and promised him that every place the sole of his foot should tread upon would be his. Here is dominion and conquest, the former being impossible without the latter. Provisionally God gave man everything, but actually he can possess it only by right of conquest.

All things included in the three kingdoms, the mineral, the vegetable and the animal, are for man's use and mastery. However these resources are not to be utilized by him aimlessly or for wrong purposes, but for right ends and objectives. These so-called things are purely instrumental, means to an end. The end is man—his happiness and his final divine destiny.

Things may be defined as land, water, air, light, sound, conditions, circumstances, in fact, all things aside from

personality itself. In other words, when we speak of things we exclude only personality from the list.

Man's attitude toward and relationship with things are determining factors in his success or failure. If he does not make the best of life no one is to be blamed but himself. Man is the final arbiter of his own destiny, swaying the scepter of power over his own faculties and material resources. Defeat cannot be blamed to fate or to a wrong setting of God's universe. It is principally due to two things, wrong attitudes and unwise relationships.

Rightly related to electricity, man turns a dangerous and mysterious force into light and power, illuminating homes and cities and turning the wheels of machinery. The ocean is a friend of man. It separates continents, furnishes moisture for rainfall necessary to civilization and is an effective means of commerce, in addition to the food it supplies for man. This same ocean can be turned into a merciless enemy. A leaking ship, a person washed overboard, an airship fallen in its flight—and that friendly ocean will swallow its victim into eternal silence. It all depends upon the relationship one has with the ocean.

Time can be well spent and energy wisely used in an investigation of the importance of right relationship with all things. But this would be an ambitious undertaking, for there are so many things with which we have to do constantly and without which we cannot live. An exhaustive study of relationships between ourselves and all things would be impossible. But we can investigate at least one or two things which may serve as illustrations and examples for other relationships. We shall especially mention money, as it is more or less representative of all other

objects that might be defined as things. If we can establish ourselves in right relationship with money, or wealth, we shall have touched the essential element in all relationships with inanimate objects.

Wealth and property, so-called, constitute the chief problems of our present so-called civilization. Possibly it would be better to say that ownership of property and wealth constitutes the outstanding problem of civilization. This fact is not due to any evil inherent in property or wealth or money, but is the result of our wrong but commonly accepted definition of ownership. It is not too much to say that a final definition of ownership and a right attitude toward wealth determine largely the quality and extent of civilization. A wrong conception of ownership is the root of many evils and paves the way for dissolution of human society and complete destruction of human character. On the other hand, a right conception of ownership and a proper attitude toward it opens the way for understanding of all human rights, peace, and good will. Is it not strange that in so important a matter as ownership, the Bible is seemingly overlooked? Is it overlooked? Or is the carnal heart so set to do evil that it desires to sidestep the grand old Book in this issue?

The author of that great classic on stewardship, "Man and His Money," insists that our generally accepted definition of ownership is pagan and therefore must be unscriptural and non-Christian, if not unchristian. The author states, and rightly so, that our conception of ownership is twofold. First, it carries the idea that one has the right to use what one owns as he wishes; and, second, that one also has the right to keep anyone else from using

what one owns. This doctrine of ownership gives two distinct rights, namely: to utilize wealth for himself and to prevent others from participating in its use. It is pointed out with emphasis that such a conception harbors and encourages the deepest feelings of deception and greed, thus, leading to all forms of graft and dishonesty. This is certainly tragic inasmuch as the human heart needs no economic or social system to encourage it in its evil tendencies. It is dangerous enough within itself without being encouraged from extraneous sources.

The opposite extreme, that of refusing to recognize the material world, can also be harmful. This is the practice of asceticism. It means to be indifferent to physical needs; to look upon the body as the prison of the soul; to crush all desire and human contacts.

Asceticism is a proof of the fact that men have realized the dangers that arise from a wrong relationship between personality and the material things of life. In non-Christian lands, such as India and China, it is common to find ascetics endeavoring to obviate these dangers. These people seem to realize the danger of soul contamination from contacts with earthly things and are absorbed in asceticism as a cure. They renounce all earthly possessions, such as wealth and property, choosing poverty and severing all relationship with the world. That is, all relationships that can be severed. This is both a confession of danger and an effort to find a cure. Will asceticism obviate the danger of too close a contact with the material world?

Asceticism has an element of truth to be found in the teachings of the Old and New Testaments. God did call

upon His people to separate themselves from the nations of the world and avoid contamination of their morals and social purity. The New Testament distinctly demands separation from the world, but this demand has been misinterpreted. Some seem to think that separation from the world forbids one to eat with sinners or to carry on business with the world. This is not the meaning of the Bible. We interpret this separation as refusal to participate in the spirit and pleasure of sin. In other words, the child of God is to find his inspiration and pleasures inside the kingdom of God and not in the kingdom of sin. To withdraw from human society and have nothing to do with other human beings is not only unnecessary, but positively wrong.

Jesus Christ gives three immortal pictures to illustrate the position of a Christian in the present world. First, He describes the Christian as being the light of the world. What does this mean? Simply, that the world is in utter darkness—mental and spiritual—that it is in confusion and chaos and needs light so it may find its way out. The Christian is to be a candle to furnish the light to better things. How can a man let his light shine that others might see it when he is hidden in a cave or while living in the stillness of the desert? To shine as a light one must necessarily live among men, that they may see the light from his illuminated spirit.

In the second place, Jesus Christ describes the Christian as the salt of the earth. What does this mean? Simply that the world is corrupt, that it is in a process of decay and putrefaction. The odor from its social and moral condition is offensive to high heaven. Man is given

salt with which to stop the decay of human society. How can he salt the earth unless he has contact with men? This figure would be useless if God meant for men to withdraw with the salt and live as hermits.

The third picture that Jesus Christ gives of a Christian is even more impressive than the first two. "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." The implication of this statement is that the world is like a snarling, growling, biting, deceitful, devouring wolf. The lamb is sent out to counteract the influence of a wolfish world by a meek, humble and unselfish spirit and life.

The religion of Jesus Christ is not something so delicate that it must be placed in a hothouse or under glass cover to escape the contamination of a corrupt world. It is a dynamic force, a saving element. It is light, salt, salvation. Asceticism has in it an element of truth, but there is so much that is not the truth that it can never succeed. Asceticism serves one purpose only. It is evidence of a conscious danger that men feel that might arise from contact of the soul with earthly things.

Another method offered for having a right relationship to money is Socialism. It has offered a cure for the world's ills by preaching the doctrine of brotherhood and social justice, both of which are intended to place all men on a common level. Socialism will fail. Why? While Socialism has many admirable principles, especially in its proclamation of equality of justice, brotherhood of man, standards of idealism, it offers no power with which to realize the standards presented. It holds up an ideal but shows no way by which that ideal can ever be reached.

Our trouble lies principally in moral character, which requires transformation. Socialism insists upon reformation, but gives us nothing that will transform human society. It offers to us a new machine, but the trouble is this new machine would be in the hands of the same operators, unchanged as to motive and character.

Communism also offers us a cure for the ills growing out of ownership of property. It demands the overturning of the capitalistic system. While we all admit that the old capitalistic machine is certainly in need of repairs and changes, we would face the same fundamental problem, namely, the operator of the machine. Would his motives be better; would his heart be less selfish than the heart of the man who operates our present system?

Communism would seek to place human responsibility and ownership in the state, taking all responsibility and all ownership from the individual. This doctrine seemingly forgets that the only way to make a community is with individuals. To take from individuals personal responsibility and remove from their hearts desire for personal ownership would doubtless destroy inspiration and weaken the stamina of the individual constituting that society. Strong groups cannot be made from weak individuals. This doctrine implies that the individual is the product of the state or of the social group, that society carries responsibility and creates the individual. To be sure, there is truth in this contention. Society makes the person and the person makes society. This is a bridge that rests upon two fundamental pillars.

How are we to face the question of ownership? Is it wrong to have property? Is it a sin to have any contact

with material things, such as wealth? Must we forsake business and refuse to handle money, turn our backs upon food and clothes and homes and embrace poverty in order to become saints? In other words, must we entirely separate ourselves from all that is material in order to rise to spiritual heights? The answer is found in a right conception of ownership. Harm does not lie in things, but in the use of things, in the attitude toward things and in the relationship with things. Destruction of property would not change the situation. The change that is needed is not concerned with property, but with the individual himself and his attitude and his relationship with property.

The Bible gives us the only sound doctrine of ownership, beginning in the Old Testament and climaxing in the New with the teachings of Jesus Christ. The history of the year of jubilee does much to make clear God's conception of ownership as revealed in the Old Testament. The year of jubilee came every fifty years, consummating the sabbatical system. This year was marked principally by the return of landed estates, the giving up of pledges, the setting free of all servants, the cancellation of debts. The distinct implication was that man is to possess wealth for a limited time only. It was the divine intention, no doubt, to offset the danger of becoming too much attached to earthly possessions.

All through the Bible man is warned against the danger of riches. This thought of ownership for a limited time only is made clear by the very fact of death, which ends all earthly ownership. No man can possess wealth

for very long, for death will take it from him and pass it on to another. Why become so attached to something which at best can be kept for only a few years?

Jesus Christ, our great Teacher, makes it clear that man owns nothing. While it is true that he is to have dominion over all things God created on the earth, he is not an owner in an absolute sense. The world's conception of ownership implies sovereignty and absolute control, which conception is improper and lies at the root of a multitude of evils in our present economic system. No place can be found in the Word of God where we are given sovereignty, with absolute control of anything earthly or material. Man is not and cannot be an owner in an absolute sense. He is not a sovereign. He owns nothing and has no right to claim ownership of anything whatsoever. Sovereign ownership and absolute control are to be found in God and in Him alone.

There is an ownership, a true one, but not such as is commonly held today. True ownership must not and cannot be divorced from the fundamental principles of stewardship. In fact, Christianized ownership is nothing more than Christian stewardship. The authority of a steward does not lie within himself, but is found in someone above him, from whom he receives his authority and rights. This authority held by the steward is not absolute, but relative, not inherent, but delegated. The rights given the steward may be removed at the will of his master.

It is folly for any man to claim sovereignty over his money, or over his talents, or over his time, or even of himself. We are not our own, for we ourselves with all we

have, are under the control of a divine and supreme Sovereign.

It would be well to remember the man whom God pronounced a fool. This man was not a fool because he lacked brains or wisdom or judgment. He was not a fool in the sense of being an idiot. He was a business man and an outstanding success in his community. His success became his embarrassment and his chief problem. He looked upon his vast possessions and said, "Soul, take thine ease. Thou hast much goods laid up for many years. Eat, drink and be merry." God looked upon him with utter disgust and said, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." What was this man's fatal mistake? It was his wrong conception of ownership and stewardship. Ownership is interlocked with stewardship, or better, it is synonymous with it. True ownership and the Christian doctrine of stewardship are one and the same thing. Christian stewardship is Christian ownership and Christian ownership is Christian stewardship. They cannot be separated.

Our attitude toward the material things about us makes for destiny. Poverty, wealth have no virtue, neither have they vice. It is our attitude toward them that constitutes the virtue or the vice. Human ownership is a wrong attitude; divine ownership is a right one. Ownership lies in God, not in us. One of the great benefits that accrue from paying one's tithes is the recognition of the fact that we own nothing. The fact is, that when a man pays his tithes he has not done his full duty. It has always been difficult for me to preach on tithing for the

one reason that I find it difficult to lead men to pay their tithes without unconsciously leading them to feel that when they pay their tithes they have done their full duty toward God so far as their money is concerned. The tithe is a token, an evidence, or an acknowledgment of divine rights and divine ownership. When I pay God my tithes I confess by this fact that everything I have belongs to Him and that I am putting into circulation this small token or evidence or acknowledgment of divine ownership of all that I possess.

God not only has the right to collect the tithe, but He has a right to go far beyond that and demand everything a man possesses. Merely paying one's tithes is not the fulfillment of the requirements of the New Testament. God nowhere says that He owns a tithe of a man's income. He owns all of man's income, the ten per cent and also the ninety per cent. Man owns nothing and has no right to claim ownership of anything. God is the Sovereign, the Owner, the rightful possessor and we are His stewards.

That which is true of ownership is also true of time. Time is borrowed; it is not our own. Man is a steward of his time; not the owner of it. Man does not own his own talents. They are divinely bestowed and serve as a trust, not a possession. They are given to him from above; from Him to whom account must be given. How foolish for anyone to feel important because he possesses talents greater than those possessed by someone else. What right has anyone to feel a sense of superiority over his fellowmen just because he has been favored with extraordinary endowments? Has he the right to use those

gifts for his own personal gain and self-aggrandizement, consuming them on himself and excluding others from their benefits? The answer is too inescapable to be discussed.

Why should anyone struggle in his consecration to give his time to God? Does not this time belong to God anyway, and is he not merely a steward of it? Why should he struggle over his talents? He did not create them. He received them from a benevolent God, who can take them from him at will. He does not own his talents. He is only a steward of them. Why should a man struggle to consecrate his money to God? He does not own it. It came from God as a gift and can be removed at the will of a divine Sovereign. Man does not own his money. He is a steward of it. Why should a man struggle to give himself to God? God created him and owns him by right of creation, by right of preservation and by right of divine purchase. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit." The end of life is to honor God and give emphasis and importance to personality. This, we repeat once again, is stewardship.

Christianity is not designed to crush out all desire for personal ownership, nor does it preach the doctrine of asceticism as a means of salvation.

The doctrine of Christian stewardship should be preached day and night, from the cradle to the grave. It is the cure for the most of human ills, for in the last analysis stewardship is taking a right attitude toward things and forming proper relationship with things.

Stewardship recognizes and acknowledges God. None of the other cures today for the ills of humanity have done so. God is the only owner and the only Sovereign of this universe. He owns all things that are His and man's. He owns man and man's possessions. He has committed to us great possessions, but He recognizes us as His stewards, not as sovereigns and owners. He has never committed His sovereignty to another, nor will He ever do so. He does bestow upon man the glorious honor and power and privilege of stewardship.

The principles of stewardship enter into all the ramifications and relationships of life. They find their way into politics, into social life, into church life, into economic life, into everything. They influence the intellect, the emotions, the will. They direct the talents, control the money and wealth and finally discover personality as a supreme objective. If ownership is held synonymous with stewardship it becomes a great blessing, but without stewardship, ownership leads to turmoil, confusion, unrest, competition and deadly struggles without regard to rights of others.

It is doubtful that stewardship is possible aside from a new and transformed life. It is doubtful that anyone without being born again can have his mind impressed sufficiently with the principles of stewardship to get him to incorporate such principles into his life and practice. Faith in God, love for God, abandonment to God, the exaltation of spiritual things above all things that we could call material, seem to be the true sources from which come the true principles of stewardship.

It is not to be understood that stewardship encourages laziness or indolence. The fact is the principles of stewardship go deep into the very motive life of man and the depth of his relationship with God. A man who is lazy and unconcerned about the material things of this life just because they belong to God, has no conception whatever of personal responsibility, of divine ownership, or of the romantic principles of stewardship. Nothing can satisfy the principles of stewardship that fall short of the very best efforts one can put forth to be all he can and do all he can for God and humanity.

Three things have characterized this generation. First, individualism; second, competition and third, acquisitiveness. Individualism is stressed much today in educational circles and should be. Our emphasis upon individualism is a by-product of Christianity. We hold that in a very true sense the individual is supreme, that he does not exist for the government, but the government exists for him. Individualism is the backbone of civilization. Whenever man is a king and feels that he is just as good as anyone else, that he has the same rights as others, then, a nation has strength, provided that individualism is not selfish and exclusive. But individualism without the principle of stewardship is dangerous to everyone and everything—the person himself, the home, the school, the church and the nation. Individualism without stewardship leads to selfishness, greed, graft and dishonesty, self-sufficiency and other ills. Individualism shot through with the spirit of stewardship furnishes the mainspring to progress and achievement. Without this unselfish principle, individualism may become a menace to society, a disintegrating

element, subversive of humanity's best interests. It has led to a struggle for liberty, human rights, equality of justice and brotherhood.

Competition has also served its purpose. It has stirred and aroused the latent energies of men and women and inspired them to achievements otherwise impossible. Acquisitiveness has been a mainspring to progress. These three characteristics of this age should be virtues and not vices, but the fact is that selfishness and wrong relationships have turned them into workers of evil. Individualism, when selfish, is dangerous. Competition inspired by selfishness is a menace. Acquisitiveness when in the control of the passion of selfishness will work unlimited destruction. A right attitude and proper conception of ownership will transform all three into outstanding virtues.

Thus, our attitude toward things determines the moral quality of our actions. The Bible says the love of money is the root of all evil. It does not say that money is the root of evil, but the love of money. Money is neither good nor bad; it is neither holy nor unholy. But a wrong attitude toward money and a wrong relationship to money constitutes sin. The Bible says if a man look upon a woman to lust after her he hath already committed adultery in his heart. It is his attitude, his mental and heart state that constitutes the evil. When temptation arises, a right attitude toward the temptation results in righteousness, but a wrong attitude toward a temptation ends in sin. Joseph and Judas Iscariot are outstanding examples of the two principles under consideration.

In the life of Joseph a great temptation arose in the person of his master's wife. With all her beauty, influ-

ence, prestige, offers of promotion, and pleasure, she presented herself to Joseph and asked him to step aside from the path of integrity and devotion. Joseph was away from home, unsupported by friends and loved ones. In spite of these facts he stood the test and kept his integrity even to the endangering of his own life. The reason was the attitude in the mind and heart of this young man. He was in the midst of a sinful nation, surrounded by every influence detrimental to godliness, but there was within him a power and purity that withstood the contamination of a sinful environment. This was made possible by a right heart attitude.

Let us notice the other case, namely, Judas Iscariot. He had every good influence about him that man could desire. He walked in the presence of the greatest Teacher the world ever knew. He had the companionship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, together with His teachings, instruction and matchless influence. Although he had sat at the feet of the Master and had witnessed miracles performed before his very eyes, he went down because he loved money. He loved prestige and power and had a wrong mental and heart attitude. This made him unable to get from Jesus Christ the strength that would enable him to stand in the midst of a storm of tests and temptations.

By right attitudes in life man can transform the menial and the most undesirable tasks and experiences into genuine romance. It is not poverty that makes us unhappy so much as our attitude toward poverty. Some of the richest people I have ever seen are among the most unhappy and some of the poorest people it has been my

privilege to see and meet are among the most contented.

It is not the wind that determines the direction of the ship, but the set of the sail. Blessed is the man in the storms of life, who knows how to adjust his sails and change the gale that would blow him against the rocks, into power to propel his ship through the storm into a haven of rest.

It is difficult to imagine a sight more inspiring than a great ship in a storm, battling the raging seas. It was my privilege at one time to climb to the highest point on a great ocean liner that was fighting a terrible storm—the worst storm I have ever looked upon.

I climbed to the top of that great ship, and looked with amazement and admiration upon that storm, the most sublime and majestic thing I have ever seen. My eyes would rest upon ten thousand mountain peaks that arose from the depths of the sea, the tops of which seemed like mountains capped with snow. The gale blew the water from the tops, resembling snow driven by the wind. These mountain peaks would suddenly disappear and thousands of others would arise to take their places. The great ship would climb to the top of one of these mountain peaks, then pass out over the top with a part of the ship clear of the wave. Then the boat would turn her prow down the side of that mountain of water and look as if she would disappear in the trough of the valley between the mountain peaks, never to come up again, but when she reached the bottom she started to climb up the mountain that lay in front. My eyes filled with tears and I said, "Thank God, for a ship that will fight the storm." I noticed that the pilot kept the prow of the boat against the storm,

otherwise he would never have been able to control her on this tempestuous sea. It was her attitude and relationship with the storm that enabled her to bring safe to port her precious cargo of human life.

The boat taught me a great lesson. I said to myself, "Never again will I turn from a battle. I will face my battles. I will never run from a storm; I will face my storms. I will never run from any sorrow; I will face my sorrows. I will never run from a disappointment; I will face my disappointments and my losses. It is the attitude that counts. Right attitude means everything and certainly it means safety, while a wrong attitude spells certain destruction.

The majestic eagle in the bottom of the canyon is caught by a storm rushing down the mountainside, hurling rocks, and sticks, dealing out death. The eagle is caught unawares. What will he do? Will he face the storm, or will he try to fly away from it? Apparently he lifts his head and takes into consideration every feature of that storm. He lifts his great wings and begins to fight, not leaving the storm, but going toward it. If he goes with the wind, that wind will turn his feathers the wrong way and dash him against the rocks and to death. He goes into the storm while the wind smooths down his feathers and with every stroke of his mighty wings the wind lifts him higher and higher and higher. Finally, as he struggles against that storm, he rises above it and comes out on top of the mountain above the clouds into sunlight and safety. It is the attitude of the eagle toward the storm that lifts him.

One day Jesus said to Peter, "Peter, Satan desires thee to sift thee as wheat." The Lord seems to have said, "I met Satan up the road and he told me that he was going to sift you." Peter possibly replied something like this, "Master, you love me, you love me too much to allow Satan to sift me as wheat. You will not let him, will you, Master?" The Lord's answer was this, "Peter, I am praying for you. I am praying for you that your faith will not fail while you are in the sifter." Everyone of us will come into contact with losses, with sorrows, with disappointments and heartaches and temptation. What will be our attitude? What will be our relationship to them when they come? It is not so much the storm that counts, but it is our attitude toward it.

Right attitude is practical in its results and benefits. It will enable us to subordinate material things to the spiritual. "Love not the world, neither the things of the world." This is the command of God. We can live in the world without being of it and without being contaminated by it. We are physical and must deal with physical and material things, but we are also spiritual and must give place to spiritual things, always lifting them to a place of superiority. Right relations, right attitudes and right contacts will enable us to live in the midst of money, food, clothes, gold, silver and all earthly possessions without being contaminated in the least by them.

In the case of loss of health or of wealth one can always have a place of peace of mind and heart if he takes a right attitude. If one loses his money, knowing that he is not an owner of it but a steward of it, he will not feel that everything in life is gone.

The heart must not be anchored to the things of this life. We walk on the earth, but our citizenship is in heaven. We came into this world without anything; we will leave without anything except a glorious manhood and a beautiful character that has been built on the rock Christ Jesus.

In our next chapter it is our purpose to consider the relationship with people.

CHAPTER THREE

RELATIONSHIP WITH PEOPLE

Man by nature is fundamentally social. He is so constituted that he cannot live alone. Desire for fellowship is an essential part of his nature and life. To suppress it is to become abnormal, to oppose himself and the plan of God. Occasionally one is found who is utterly unsocial, desiring to withdraw from human society and to live alone, with his own thoughts, and refusing to share with anyone else his joys and his sorrows. Such person is the exception, not the rule.

Social nature in man is God given and constitutional. To try to escape it is like trying to escape one's own self. Social life for man is an absolute necessity from any and every viewpoint, and its implications are many.

I read a story a few years ago concerning Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. As I recall it, the story runs something like this: Adam and Eve were living happily together in this glorious Paradise, with their every need supplied. Eventually Eve became restless, discontented and hard to please. Adam did everything possible to meet this new and unexpected situation, but to no avail. Finally he became weary and almost desperate in his fruitless efforts to overcome this unhappy attitude on the part of his wonderful wife. One day the Lord came through the Garden, inquiring of Adam if he and Eve were still contented and happy. "No," replied Adam, "neither of us is happy any more. Eve has become contentious and

hard to please and as a consequence I am desperate and must have relief. Please, Lord, I pray Thee, take her away from me, for I cannot live with her any longer." The Lord granted the request of Adam and moved Eve to another location in the Garden of Eden, far away from Adam.

The first day Adam greatly enjoyed the quiet and rest, being alone. Eve was not there to argue with him and he did not have her restlessness and unhappiness to endure. The second day was also restful, but he began to miss Eve's company and companionship. By the third day Adam had become very unhappy and lonesome and felt that he could not endure her absence any longer.

Again the Lord came through the Garden and asked Adam if he were still happy and contented. Adam readily admitted that he was not, but greatly desired the return of Eve. "But," said the Lord, "I understood you to say that you wanted me to take her away and now you ask for her return." Adam dropped his head for a moment in deep thought and then said, "Lord, the woman Thou gavest me I cannot live with her and without her I cannot live." What a situation! This story is not without a vital point and application to human life everywhere. It illustrates the social nature of man and the serious complications that arise in social life.

Social life is necessary for self-expression. One of the recognized elements of personality is the power to give expression to one's own self. Social contacts are essential for self-expression and self-expression is essential to the highest development and achievements of personality. An impulse or emotion unexpressed will weaken, atrophy and

finally die. Nothing so vitalizes and empowers virtue as to march upon an open battlefield and vanquish an opposing vice. Personality cannot be passive, inactive, and expressionless. To fold up is to perish.

Social life is necessary for growth. The muscles of the body grow with exercise and harden with labor. The mind becomes keen in mental competition and the moral nature becomes strong through ethical relationships with other moral beings.

Social life makes self-expression and growth work hand in hand. The early church is an outstanding example of the value of self-expression and growth through social contacts. Those unlettered and untrained, humble men and women first espousing the cause of Christianity were soon scattered abroad over the entire civilized world and were subjected to the most rigorous sufferings and persecutions. Yet they were invincible and aggressive. Why? They never lost an opportunity to express their feelings and faith in Jesus Christ, His resurrection, and His glorious salvation. They grew through self-expression, becoming more and more dynamic and irresistible in the propagation of the truths of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Their growth was phenomenal, both personally and numerically. If they had each lived alone, praying in secret only, never testifying publicly or privately to their new found joy, they would have failed to make new converts. They would have also lost their own joy and experience and would have become spiritually anemic and finally perished, and the passing centuries would never have heard of them again.

Social life is necessary for happiness. No man can live to himself; nor can he die to himself and be happy. Happiness is not a pursuit, but the result of conditions. Personality is so marvelously created that nothing beneath itself can ever give it satisfaction. Nothing can fill its place or satisfy the demands of man's nature other than personality itself. Social life is an essential in the happiness of a normal and rational human being. No one is complete without it. One human being is complementary of another. By association we create an atmosphere of inspiration, hope, courage, competition and satisfaction by presenting to one another ideals and examples of achievements. Even the friendly clashing of personalities may be of untold benefit.

Social groups, such as the family, the school, the church, the nation, are not accidental, but the result of divine wisdom and human necessity.

Social life has two aspects, the negative and the positive. The first may be illustrated by gregarious animals. These animals live together in a very negative sense. That is, they do not fight. But at the same time they have no fellowship, no mutual understanding, and no interest in the welfare of one another.

It is also possible for men to have contacts on this level. They might associate together for various reasons in a very negative way, without fighting one another. They might be bound together from necessity of self-preservation, or for some objective reason, to accomplish a common purpose, and yet have no particular interest in one another. Self-preservation is not sufficient reason for real fellowship, neither is some objective task. To

live together or associate together in a sort of colorless, impersonal manner, without personal interest in one another and without sympathetic feeling and love is what we mean by negative fellowship. This sort of fellowship is not deeply rooted, if rooted at all, and can therefore easily drop into the lower level of conflicts and war.

It is indicative of organization, not organism. In an organism, each member is vitally concerned about each other member, for the members of an organism are interlocked and interrelated so they must exist or perish together. An organization might exist for its own self-protection, or for the accomplishment of some objective beyond itself and for itself, and yet the members of such organization may have little interest in one another. This is all too common, even among church members.

Positive social life is more than the absence of war. It is a positive expression of oneself to another, a feeling of understanding and sympathy. Animals may live together without devouring one another, but do they enjoy one another in a positive expression of their feelings and reactions? It could hardly be so. But this is true of human beings.

Not long ago I was a guest in a home that offered me the most whole-hearted welcome. While there I slept in a very comfortable bed and ate the most delicious and nourishing food obtainable, all of which I fully enjoyed. When the time came for me to leave, I thanked the family most cordially for the food and the bed and the hospitality I had enjoyed but I said to them something like this: "I have enjoyed *you,* the *family itself,* far more than

I have enjoyed the food, the bed or the other physical bounty you have so magnanimously granted me."

The observation does not belong to this discussion, necessarily, but the implication is so appropriate we cannot refrain from mentioning one word while passing. This relates to the tragic situation in some churches where fellowship is broken between professed Christian people, and they have even stooped to the low level of carnal warfare. Such people not only fail to live on the high plane of positive social fellowship, but have even sacrificed negative fellowship. This is beneath the standard commonly expected of high class animals. Yet this breakdown may occur under the cloak of religion.

May we strive to live a life of a higher order; a life of fellowship and communion. Then it will be said of us what was said of the early Christians, "Behold how they love one another."

Social life is not easy, for it is seriously complicated. Note the different groups, such as the political, the economic, the cultural, the religious, all of which are more or less complex in nature and therefore hard to control. The different groups themselves are divided and subdivided, making conditions still more complicated and sensitive. Each person is to some extent a part of all these groups and must be more or less related to each of them. This makes the case of each person a complicated and difficult one. In politics there are several parties; in religion there are are many churches and shades of belief and difference of interpretation, and in finance the theories are numberless. Our friends and loved ones live in

these different groups and hold as more or less sacred their views concerning them.

The situation is still further complicated by the fact of differences in temperament and disposition of the individuals with whom we must deal constantly. There are inherited tendencies, acquired dispositions, and psychological differences, as well as many peculiar and mental traits in us all. Then we are not to overlook the difference between ideals which we hold, resulting from our teachings. The ideals of some are very low, while others are high and sublime.

Added to all this is the freedom of the will, the freedom of choice. No free moral agent can be mentally coerced, or compelled to make choices against his will. This right to choose on the part of every individual, together with inherited tendencies and traits, teachings and divergence of ideals and standards, makes the social situation anything but simple and easy; but with all this it is not hopeless.

We now approach a problem that we shall endeavor to discuss later in this chapter: How to get along with people. And this is our greatest problem and doubtless our most difficult one.

The human race has been characterized since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden by confusion, conflict, war. Nations have arisen against nations because of conflict of interests, either real or imaginary.

The conflict between nations is not the darkest side of this picture. It is also true that people in the same nation and in the smaller groups have no easy time getting along among themselves. In business there are competitive and

cutthroat methods; one group organized against another and yet these groups cannot live without one another. Independent and yet dependent; needing each other and yet trying to murder each other. This is the picture and we call it business.

In many homes there is unnecessary trouble. Husbands and wives, unable to get along with each other, separate, break up their homes, and damn their children, whom they are supposed to love and protect. Children from these broken homes form an army that marches day and night toward crime, death, and hell. All of this is the result of conflicts in the home circle, the most sacred group on earth.

This confusion should disappear entirely from the religious circles, but sad to say, it does not. Different churches, sects, and movements illustrate this fact, together with the innumerable shades of belief in religious subjects. This situation has been a real hindrance to the growth of Christianity in the earth. For many people, though possessing hungry hearts and inquiring minds, have turned away from the claims of religion in bewilderment.

In most of the social groups confusion arises among the individuals primarily because of conflicting interests and selfishness. But in religion another cause must be looked for. No doubt some selfishness can be found here. But the trouble arises mainly from other causes. One is deep convictions. Nowhere else are convictions so deep and so fixed as in religion. Here the best of men and women are likely to clash, not because they are mean or selfish, but because they have such clear-cut ideas and possess such definite opinions and moral convictions on re-

ligious subjects. Moral principles and convictions are fundamentally important and form the backbone of a genuine religious movement. However, they make it easy for people to disagree, and disagree with strong determination. These moral feelings are a source of strength, but at the same time a source of danger in so far as getting along together is concerned.

Conscience plays a larger part in religion than anywhere else. And this faculty in all people is not always equally enlightened. Conscience has two distinct functions to perform, impulse and discrimination. Impulse, which urges response and obedience in the light of known duty, should be perfect in all. Discrimination is a matter of education, being ability to tell what is right and what is wrong. If these two were equally perfect in all individuals the problems of human association would be much easier to solve. Both faculties are underdeveloped in some people, while highly developed in others. In some, one of the faculties is strong, while in others, one may be weak. Some people, because of their training and advantages and general or specific cultural background have more light than others and, therefore, their conscience functions more perfectly in the matter of discrimination. This is the reason some people will do things seemingly without compunction of conscience, that others cannot do and keep the smile of God. This fact often leads to harsh judgment and misunderstandings among good people.

Another very clear reason for clashes among professed Christians is the presence of emotions, the tides of which run higher in religion than elsewhere. There is no other

social group that has its emotions aroused more frequently and stirred more deeply than those in divine worship. A high emotional state always makes personalities more sensitive to one another. Their deep convictions, their unequally developed and enlightened conscience, and their high state of emotionalism often lead Christian people to clash. We mention these things in order to build up resistance against unnecessary clashes of any kind, even though such clashes be in the best temper and spirit.

All real happiness and sorrow arise from relationship, either to things or personalities. This, we admit, is a very direct and comprehensive assertion, but it will stand investigation and the most painstaking analysis. We have seen how this is true regarding things. Suppose a man's relationship with money is wrong. For example: he loves it. Would this not prove a source of evil to himself and to others? Suppose he does not love money, but acts as a steward of God, taking a right attitude toward it and recognizing that God is the owner and that he is using money as a sacred trust. The first relationship is wrong and will make him unhappy, while the other is right and will enhance his happiness every day of his life.

Even more so is happiness dependent on relationships with other personalities. When two wills conflict and fellowship is broken, the result is sorrow; but when two personalities agree and have fellowship, the result is happiness in a true sense of the word. If this reasoning is true, and it is, then how careful people should guard their relationships to avoid unnecessary clashes and to promote understanding and heartfelt fellowship. Our human friendships largely fix our future, even extending into

destiny itself. Show me your friends, those from whom you get your happiness and fellowship, and I can easily prophesy, and quite accurately so, your life here and hereafter. This influence is more far-reaching than the effects of poverty, adversity, or wealth.

The importance of right relationship with people can never be overstated or overemphasized. Here it should be stated that the most difficult problem that is faced is the problem of getting along with one another. Once I performed a marriage ceremony for a young couple, who after the ceremony asked me for advice. They insisted that I could help them and they asked me to be perfectly frank with them and tell them how to make the most of life. I told them several things that I felt certain would help. The last and most important was this: "Your greatest problem," I said, "is not one of economics, merely making a living. This is important, but not your chief difficulty. Your great problem is learning how to get along with each other." They looked at me and smiled, as if to say, "We are madly in love with each other. How can you say that?" Anyway I was right and if they have not found it out they will. This is true not only in the home, but in business and in the church and everywhere. How to get along with one another is the great problem of human beings in this world.

This should be considered one of the fine arts, if not the finest of the fine arts. Years are required to master the violin or the piano or to train the voice to speak and sing. A lifetime is necessary to develop skill sufficient to place on the canvas with paint and brush a work of art, or to bring from the crude piece of marble the form

of an angel by the skillful use of the chisel and mallet. Such achievements are praiseworthy and make immortal the name of the artist, but there is an art that far surpasses any of these, the art of touching the strings of the human heart, producing music and harmony that are heard and felt through time and eternity.

To master this art, we should realize the problem. No doctor is capable of prescribing for the human body until he has first made a careful and thorough diagnosis. No general is competent to lead or direct an army in battle until he knows something of the strength of his army and is acquainted with the conditions under which his men must fight. If we have a weakness in the matter of adjusting to other people we should admit that fact and face the weakness in ourselves. No man can ever remedy his own situation until he can see it and is willing to acknowledge it. If he admits legal complications, he will in all probability seek for counsel, or if he is sick and knows it, he will consent to call a physician.

It is comparatively easy for some people to make adjustments, while it is exceedingly hard for others. However, this is an art that comes to no one by inheritance. Regardless of the background, it is after all an acquisition, an achievement.

Again the problem must not only be frankly faced, but faced with resolution and determination. No man will get along with people until he resolves to do so and backs that resolution with sufficient determination to keep everlastingly at the job. Success in this field comes with practice. This is not a gift that can be received by prayer at the altar, like the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is not a

gift in a primary sense, but rather an attainment. Many tears may be shed and mistakes made and apologies given before the lesson is learned with lasting effect, but the goal is worth the race.

How to develop this art is a great question and one that needs discussion again and again. Time spent in the exploration of this field is not lost. May we make a little investment here. We humbly present a few suggestions as to how to get along with people. In doing so we do not wish to confine ourselves to the negative side of this issue merely, but we desire to enter into the positive element as well.

(1). The first step in the art of getting along with one another is realizing that we ourselves have weaknesses that are a trial to others. Strange it is that we are so keen to see the shortcomings in our neighbor and so very slow to see the very same abnormalities in ourselves. Not infrequently has one listened to a friend describe the shortcomings of some mutual friend, while one stood there thinking at that very moment of the same weaknesses in the friend who was doing the talking about another, who was himself utterly unconscious of his own condition.

I remember upon a certain occasion being in a moody condition myself, rather pitying myself, but at the same time earnestly praying for grace to put up with some people who had been and were still a terrible trial to me. I was on my knees asking God for help. The Lord whispered to me so gently, not reproving, not rebuking, though He knew I needed and deserved severe reproof. His words remain with me. "You are greatly tried with certain people, are you not?" "Yes, Lord," I replied, "I am sorely

tried and must have grace to be patient and put up with them. Help me, I pray Thee, for my soul is afflicted." The Lord answered, and His answer has lingered and will linger in my memory forever, "Has it ever occurred to you, my son, how much I put up with in you while you are enduring others?" Others were a trial to me, to be sure, but it had not gripped me that I was a trial to others. I now recognized that it is a two-way game, that I must get along with them, while they get along with me.

Realization of my own weaknesses and acknowledgment of them prepare me mentally and emotionally to meet my fellowmen and assume a right attitude toward them.

(2). The next essential, in my judgment, is a deep, heartfelt sympathy for others. It is not enough to realize our shortcomings. To stop with that would end in a state of introspection or possibly lead to utter discouragement. We are to examine ourselves, to be sure, and know our own liabilities, but our attention is to extend to others, for we are dealing with relationships between personalities.

"Weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice" is a scriptural injunction which beautifully explains the moral principle here involved. A critical and cynical spirit will ruin the disposition of any man and completely vitiate his influence over the lives of others; while a broad, deep understanding and sympathetic attitude will enrich one's own soul and create an atmosphere in which others will find cheer, sunshine, hope and inspiration. The impact of one personality upon another for good is one of the most sublime realities in human experi-

ence. This, however, is impossible without sympathy and deep feeling for one another.

Someone has remarked that a good case of religion will accomplish this end, and that when we come to an altar these problems are completely solved. True it is that religion is essential and will do much in accomplishing this great and worthy end; but it is also true that real sympathy for others is a great help to religion. This is a tunnel that can be dug from both ends.

(3). To get along with people most effectively it is wise never to cross them unless some real issue is involved. I saw two good men meet and greet each other cordially. One said, "We are having some lovely weather, aren't we?" The other replied, "Well, you might call this good weather, but it is not my idea of good weather." Immediately there was a clash of ideas and opinions and over nothing. We all talk about the weather. This is one of the chief contributions the weather makes to human life, furnishing a topic of friendly conversation, especially when there is nothing else to talk about. Certainly it is not something over which to disagree. What hope is there for a fellowship between two people if they cannot even agree on the incidental matters, such as weather or other introductory subjects. When two people agree on something their opinion of each other is raised, but when they disagree the opposite result is inevitable. To agree with the feelings or judgment of another person causes him to raise his estimate of you. Then how important it is to agree in all things that are purely incidental, avoiding mental and emotional clashes unless something is at stake in the disagreement.

There is to be no implication of compromise in this urge to obviate clashing. No man should ever be asked to compromise a sacred moral principle, or perhaps any other kind of principle of importance in the interest of peace. Peace purchased at the price of principle is too costly and at best can be only temporary. Many times we clash uselessly over incidental matters, which are within themselves of little concern to ourselves or to others in final results.

Regardless of the insignificance of the matter over which disagreements might occur, when two wills clash the results can become grave and tragic. Never cross a man's will if it can be prevented without undue sacrifice.

None of us, perhaps, has taken sufficient time to classify fundamental and incidental issues. Failure to distinguish between incidentals and fundamentals is the source of all kinds of trouble, while a proper classification would obviate many difficulties that constantly arise in social groups. I wonder if time would not be saved if more effort were put forth in defining issues attributing to them their proper importance.

All will do well to avoid moral, mental, emotional and religious clashes unless there are principles involved that must be protected. This, we say, is not to be interpreted as over against the exchange of ideas and feelings. Feelings and ideas can be expressed and should be without confusion, or broken fellowship.

(4). Courtesy presents itself as one of the vital principles in the art of getting along with one another. "Be courteous to all men," is the Word of the Lord as given to us through one of the greatest scholars the world has

produced—Paul, the mighty apostle to the Gentiles. In this assertion Paul makes no exception. "Be courteous to all men." This statement is all inclusive. One said, "I know some people, who do not deserve courtesy." That might be true, but such fact does not relieve one of this sound moral principle. One owes it to himself to be courteous, whether such courtesy is deserved or not. Courtesy is a duty one owes to everyone else regardless of personal merit. No discourteous person can ever feel comfortable within his own bosom, nor rest with a clear conscience at night. Man is a moral being and must necessarily yield to the demands and claims of moral principles. One owes it to himself to be courteous to others.

Then, too, courtesy is essential for the exercise of influence over others. Courtesy is the cheapest thing we have to give and yet it brings back to us our greatest dividends. It costs one nothing to be courteous to others, but the results from the investment in friendship, good will and influence are colossal. The good will of any man is valuable, but impossible without courtesy.

In an eastern hotel lived an elderly woman, wealthy, but alone in the world so far as blood relations were concerned. The infirmities of age had weakened her, and disease had left her little more than a cripple. The hotel was her world. In her room she read and dreamed of the past, when she was young, attractive and strong, and had a large circle of friends. Now, she was lonely and shut in with her own feelings and thoughts. Three times a day she made her way with some difficulty to the hotel dining room for her meals. But for the elevator, she could not have made these trips. Always it was necessary for the

elevator to wait moments for her to get on and off, and usually to the evident annoyance of the operators, all except one. She was often the object of disgust and unkind remarks among the elevator boys, with one exception. That one always smiled at her when she entered and left the car, never failing to aid her on and off, and always with extreme courtesy. The other boys would poke fun at this one boy, who was so kind to the old lady.

One day she failed to appear at the elevator for the ride to the dining room. She had been carried to a hospital, for her last illness. Days passed, and the old sick woman had been all but forgotten, when a fine looking gentleman appeared at the hotel inquiring for a certain boy, calling his name. It was the name of the boy who never failed to be kind to the old, sick, lonely woman. This gentleman was an attorney, and when introduced to the boy for whom he had made inquiry, informed him that he had been mentioned in a will. The will was that of the elderly woman. She had not forgotten the courtesy of a kind-hearted boy, and had bequeathed to him fifty thousand dollars cash. Courtesy always pays in some way.

Discourtesy lies at the root of much of the unhappiness and collapse seen in society and business. Homes are wrecked on the rocks of discourtesy. During courtship and honeymoon, deeply felt courtesy is always in evidence, even in the very minute and most incidental relationships, but this often passes away after the wedding and the couple settle down to the cold, sordid, common facts of a legalistic partnership called matrimony. Romance often passes because it is not sustained by a lasting

and abiding courtesy which could cost so little and yet yield such abundant fruit in happiness.

I love to think of courtesy and good manners as synonymous. One has defined good manners as "Ability to make others feel important." This definition will stand careful analysis. It is pregnant with meaning and exceedingly rich with implication. Can we disagree with people unkindly and express our disagreement discourteously and still make them feel important? Can we be neglectful of them and make them feel important? Can we live with them in an atmosphere of mere endurance and make them feel important? Can we let them feel that we consider ourselves a shade better than they are and yet make them feel important?

I saw a woman literally damn her husband by her own superiority complex. She was very spiritual in her own eyes, while her husband was a sort of defeated, humiliated, brow-beaten, timid soul, who had come to feel that God was not much interested in his case anyway. I talked to him privately and discovered his mental attitude toward himself, his wife, and God. The case was pitiful. His wife had exercised a sort of censorship over him religiously and otherwise. He told me she would never believe he had religion even if he possessed it. He was quiet in spirit and disposition, while she was talkative and boisterous in nature, just the opposite to him. He was retiring, while she did not suffer that same malady. What he was she was not. It was a case of two personalities that differed fundamentally.

I finally persuaded the man to go to the altar for prayer, where in my honest opinion he actually touched

God. But his emotional reaction did not correspond to his wife's idea of religious experience, and she immediately informed him that he was only fooling himself, that he had not found God. He gave up and died soon afterward. I think maybe the Lord saved him on his deathbed and relieved him of many years of torture. This good woman had religion and loved the Lord, but she lacked the ability to make her own husband feel important.

The possibilities of courtesy as an asset to business, usefulness and happiness are boundless. The influence of everyone can be increased by the exercise of courtesy. This is true regarding the church. Frequently church members come in and go out, paying little attention to one another and permitting the stranger to come and go and continue to be a stranger. Why should anyone ever be a stranger in a church? The pastor announced, "You are a stranger here but once," but why this once? Why should anyone ever be a stranger in a church? If people are strangers it is because we permit them to be such. Religion does not thrive in a church atmosphere of coldness and bad manners. Every man is a king—an uncrowned king—a king in possibilities, if not in fact. Why not treat him according to his possibilities and not merely according to his present state?

To drive one away from religion and from God through discourtesy under the guise of piety, deep spirituality, and courage that boasts of willingness to die for its convictions constitutes one of life's darkest and deepest tragedies.

Legalism in religion is one of its most deadly enemies. A legalist will stand for law, for convictions, for right, and do so uncompromisingly and often with such utter

lack of regard for the feelings of others as to drive them from God and the offers of religion. Such persons may be cruel and merciless and console themselves in the thought that they are standing for principle and trying to glorify God. To them law means more than flesh and blood. To them man is made for the law, and not law for the man. Oh, the tragedy of religion without sympathy, which should superinduce good manners and courtesy.

Courtesy is not something to be put on as a garment, but is a part of one's life, rising out of the feelings, the heart, and expressed, not for policy's sake, but from genuine sincerity of purpose. It is not artificial or superficial, but natural, real, spontaneous. Its root is not external but internal. It comes from within out.

As related to oneself, every other person occupies one of three positions. First, he is on one's own level, or second, he is on a higher level above him, or third, he is on a lower. Courtesy is to be exercised in all three cases, but is not equally easy in all. It is far easier to be courteous to those on one's own level than to those on the other levels mentioned. It is easy to feel those above us do not need our courtesy and that those beneath us do not deserve it, while those on our own level both need and deserve it. This latter attitude should extend into all three fields. The pride of the human heart might oppose the extension of courtesy to the one above, for that looks like kowtowing. The selfishness of the human heart might oppose extension of courtesy to the one beneath, for that one can do nothing in return for the courtesy granted. The love of God and good, old-time religion is the only thing

on earth that can make men normal and cause them to act naturally in all of these relationships.

Courtesy brings its rewards. Dr. Joseph H. Smith told this story in my presence. I shall relate it as best I can remember it, and give Dr. Smith full credit and ask for charity in any mistakes occurring in the story as repeated by me. Dr. Smith, as I remember the story, was in a meeting where he was giving out the message of God and holiness, anxiously endeavoring to reach every soul possible for Christ. The meeting was being attended by many whom the doctor was passionately desirous of influencing to deeper spiritual things. On the front seat sat a man, evidently good and Spirit-filled, but extremely eccentric, wearing a hat on which appeared a tin sign reading something like this: "Holiness unto the Lord." This hat and tin sign remained on the brother's head during the services. At the close of every service the brother with the tin sign on his hat was always first to greet Dr. Smith, putting his arms affectionately about the doctor and making it rather difficult for others to shake hands with him. The good brother was a poor example of common sense and became a real problem.

The meeting closed Sunday and Monday morning Dr. Smith boarded a ferry boat to cross the river. While seated on the upper deck with some prominent friends, he saw coming up the stairway the familiar brother with the tin sign on his hat, who, upon seeing the doctor came toward him, smiling. The doctor said he was tempted to ignore the brother, but suddenly and tenderly there came into his mind these words, "Be courteous unto all men, even to the man with the tin sign on his hat." Dr. Smith stood

up, stretched out his hand to greet the brother and asked him to sit down by his side.

While crossing the river the brother with the tin sign whispered into the ear of Dr. Smith this message: "Dr. Smith, I have been praying for you throughout the meeting and one day while in prayer God seemed to tell me a secret concerning you, that you are suffering from a certain malady, a malady that I once had myself and of which I was completely relieved by a certain medicine I was induced to use. God told me to tell you if you would take this same medicine you would be permanently relieved of this physical inconvenience." Dr. Smith was deeply impressed and emotionally moved by the message of the brother, for he knew that no one had information concerning this malady except himself and his wife. When the ferry boat landed, the doctor went to a drug store, purchased the remedy, and was completely and permanently cured. This blessing had come through one who had been such a trial, a man wearing a tin sign on his hat. "Be courteous to all men." It costs nothing, but brings great rewards.

Courtesy is not merely for matters of agreement, but should extend into all disagreements as well. We may never be able to agree perfectly in all issues, but courtesy should not be absent when disagreements arise. Disagreements are never fundamentally serious until they endanger fellowship. Broken fellowship is never easy to mend. This is the crucial point to be watched. When fellowship is strained it is time to be cautious, careful and judicious. I never feel uneasy over little disturbances in local churches until such disagreements reach the stage of

strained relationship between the members of the church. This should never be allowed, but often is. The causes may be different, but the results are the same. It takes years to mend broken fellowship, which is frequently the result of very trivial things.

One of the most important lessons we ever learn is that we can differ in judgment and yet remain warm personal friends. Why should I consider a man my enemy because he differs from me in judgment? If I fall out with him on this ground alone, I am exceedingly narrow and uncharitable. Usually when men differ in judgment they allow themselves in the heat of excitement or deep moral convictions to express their ideas in terms that appear disrespectful and discourteous. When this is done the issue is transferred from the ideas under consideration to personalities. This is sad. I must concede that a man could disagree with me in judgment and yet love me warmly and be my faithful personal friend. If this concession is not possible, then fellowship is indeed a delicate and insecure thing.

The importaance of courtesy is found also in the fact that a personal injury, either real or imaginary, is hard to heal. This is due, no doubt, to the strong element of ego in us all. By ego I do not mean selfishness or false pride, but self-respect and self-protection. I am always conscious of the fact that my professional and official mistakes will be sooner forgotten and more easily adjusted than any personal offense. Personal offenses are hard to forget and linger in the memory with unpleasant effects long after other mistakes and blunders are entirely forgotten. Thus, the importance of being careful to avoid personal offense

and the undeniable value of making another feel that he is not without importance in the world.

When leaving some homes where we have been guests, we found ourselves turning back to get a final look at the house and the people from whom we were departing, wishing that we might remain longer and hoping to return soon. From other places we departed with a feeling of relief. Seldom, perhaps, do we analyze the difference in the two experiences, but when understood the difference is simple. In one home we are made to feel important, through heartfelt and spontaneous courtesy, while in the other home though we are treated kindly yet not in the spirit of genuine, whole-hearted hospitality. In one home we are important; in the other we are just ordinary. One we enjoyed; the other we appreciated, but endured. One furnished real courtesy, the other did not.

(5). To take a vital interest in others is another effective way of getting along with them. On a certain occasion I was burdened almost to the breaking point and was in such need of relief I was obliged to approach some personality, human or divine. Meeting a friend I began immediately to unload upon him my burdens. Naturally, I looked for his reactions to my problems and soon discovered that what I said was making no impression upon his mind and less upon his heart. In the midst of the conversation he broke in with his own problems. I stopped short in a sort of daze, being shocked into a new realization that there was no help for me in him but there might be help for him in me. I immediately changed my viewpoint and encouraged him to unload his problems on me, which he did most willingly and freely. When he

walked away, I had the pleasant consciousness of having helped my brother, but with the sad knowledge that he had not reacted to my burdens. I had made a good impression upon him, fortunately, but he had made a poor one upon me. In that case I was the winner. While I had failed to get the kind of relief I had sought, I had found a better relief in a different way, relief that comes in helping someone else. I had taken an interest in him, but often I have failed at that point. Of that fact no one is more keenly conscious than I.

There is usually an approach into one's heart, into one's soul, into one's life. To find that approach is an art. No key will more quickly open a life and do so more effectively than interest, real sincere interest in one's affairs, whether those affairs are one's wife and children, financial problems, social interests or religious concerns. Anything that conerns one is an open door into one's affections and life.

Mothers and fathers are rarely sought by their children for counsel regarding their love affairs, not because the children do not love and respect them, but because the children fail to find a sympathetic understanding. This is not a matter of love, but one of interest. We cannot win people unless we have an interest in them.

(6). The climax in getting along with other people is found in the great law of love, the greatest law known. This law lifts us above all other laws, for in keeping this one we keep the others without effort. The law of love is supreme and all inclusive. If we keep it we need not worry about the others.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Sublime expressions these are! They contain understanding, sympathy, fellowship, charity, kindness. The scarlet thread of truth that runs through them is the solution of our social problems. Love overlooks infirmities, shortcomings, abnormalities and eccentricities in others, and pours out its very self in unselfishness.

Love demands justice. "What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with thy God." Do justly. This is a demand of love. To do justly to all men. While it is right, it is not easy. Justice is a great virtue, but not common. Jesus had no easy task to overcome prejudice in His own disciples, who persisted in thinking that the glorious benefits of salvation through Jesus Christ were for the Jews only. It required a mighty transformation of character, a mighty Holy Ghost baptism, and line upon line, precept upon precept to overcome it.

Love demands mercy also. Justice without mercy is cold and incapable of meeting the needs of a brokenhearted and bankrupt world. If we could all have justice, even justice in all cases, that would be wonderful. It is not easy to get justice in any case, but we need more than justice. We want mercy, and we need it. Many a soul has been driven to death by some unkind act of a brother, who should have been both just and merciful, but was neither.

Here is a man who has not been to church for weeks and has paid nothing into the treasury. What shall we do with him? Shall we scratch his name off the list? He is of no value to us. He helps to pay no bills, he denies us his presence. Shall we not remove his name and forget him? Before doing that may we not ask ourselves one question? Is this just and merciful? Have we visited him, treated him kindly and loved him and made him to feel that he is of some value? Have we prayed with him and kindly dealt with him with justice and with mercy? Is it not better to be too merciful and be criticized for it, than it is to be too harsh, driving someone away from the warm influence of the gospel of the Son of God?

Of all the avenues to the human heart, love is the most effective, while others, we admit, have their unquestionable value. A minister may preach an old, rugged gospel from his pulpit—the preacher's throne. He may speak words of soberness and truth and his congregation will likely react kindly to the message if it comes from a heart full of love. "Does he love me and is he trying to help me?" is the vital question in the heart of every hearer, or "Is it possible that he is trying to get even with somebody?" "Or, is he cold and harsh in his attitude and in the presentation of his message is he unsympathetic?" Every message for a congregation needs to be wrought out on the anvil of fervent love and presented in the spirit of sympathy. Love demanding justice, love demanding mercy, love demanding helpfulness to others never fails. When everything else proves static, dead, ineffective, love will work miracles in its transformation of lives.

Another demand of love is motive—a right motive. Religion has two distinct sides, the inner and the outer, the experiential and conduct. To be normal one must give proper attention to both. To develop the outer side of religion at the neglect of the inner; or to develop the conduct at the neglect of experience within the heart is to become formal, legalistic, and possibly pharisaical. On the other hand, to develop the inner, the conscious, the experiential, the mystical side of religion at the utter neglect of ethics, of conduct, of relationship with others, tends to fanaticism. A moral act cannot be divorced from a responsible moral agent. Conduct implies rewards and punishment for the agent creating the conduct. All conduct is related to motive. No responsible act of man is ever considered separate and apart from some motive that actuates it. What is the motive? This is a proper question and demands an answer in all processes of judgment where rewards and punishment are involved.

It seems that much of our conduct is executed without a careful examination of the motive that superinduces it. For example, Brother Jones had a right to vote "yes," or "no," in the recall of his pastor or in the re-election of the District Superintendent, while God had a right to question the motive that prompted the vote. What is the motive back of the vote? Did he vote his honest conviction and judgment, or was he influenced by his likes and dislikes of the pastor or the Superintendent? What motive was back of the act? Was it an honest, unbiased and unselfish act, or was it colored by personal prejudice.

This fact must be taken into consideration in our relationships with one another. Do I love my friends for

what they are, or for what they can do for me? One attitude is right, the other is wrong.

Again permit me to emphasize the vital place of attitude in getting along with other people, both in negative and positive fellowship. Attitude is not only vital, but a personal responsibility. This is a work God cannot do for us; it is our own personal task and cannot be delegated to another. It is not unusual for us to blame others for our unhappy situations, even in some extreme cases blaming God himself. One stands all but friendless and immediately casts reflection upon others for their infidelity, fickleness, or disloyalty, not dreaming that he himself might have driven good friends away by his own unfortunate attitude. Another in poverty strikes back at what appears misfortunes, hard luck, and dishonesty of others. Is it not possible in many cases that his own poor management, his own extravagances, or his own misconduct and attitude might have been at the root of his trouble? Maybe this is not true and maybe it is. At least the case is worthy of careful investigation. Another man loses his position, is voted out with seeming injustice or dismissed by his employer and finds himself in deep distress. Is he to blame? Maybe not. But maybe he is to blame. What was his attitude toward his employer or his work? Did he co-operate? Did he show a good spirit? Did he manifest a right disposition? Was his own attitude what it should have been?

Many times one is in spiritual distress and tries bravely to re-establish himself but makes little progress and wonders why. His attitude may be at the root of his trouble and usually is. God is ready and willing. Man

must orientate toward truth, situations, people and God as the flower to the sunlight. God will not do this for him, he must do it for himself, then the blessings of God will come to him like the sunshine and air through the open window.

When first converted my soul was afflicted by a certain young woman who thought of herself more highly than she should have. She was very high-minded and haughty. In those days girls wore long bows in their hair and dressed with clothing that was exceedingly noisy when they walked. This girl would come to church late and walk forward to the front seat, always attracting a lot of attention by her mannerisms. When she was seated on the front pew she would look up, toss her head and smile, as much as to say, "You may begin, now, I am here." I looked at her with utter contempt and my soul was afflicted. I said, if I could leave this place so I would never be bothered with this sight again I could really live a Christian life. Finally, God had mercy on me and let me move, but to my chagrin and disappointment, I found another at the next place even worse than she was. Then for the first time it dawned upon me that I might find at least one contemptible person in every congregation and community.

Was I to pray for God to kill the hypocrites and the unpleasant people just for my personal comfort? This did not seem right, so I changed my prayer. Instead of asking God to remove all of my stumbling blocks or hindrances, I began to pray for sufficient strength and charity to put up with them, to endure them and even, perchance, to enjoy them. God performed an operation upon my

heart and my life was revolutionized just because I assumed a right attitude, then God was able to reach me with His grace and blessing. Other people will become better looking, seem more intelligent, more attractive when we take a right attitude toward them. Then one who has been such a trial can be transformed into a real pleasure and possibly into a source of help by our own attitude toward him. I have tried this remedy and I know it works. It has saved me from full many a sorrow and trial.

Love aids attitude, but attitude also makes smoother the path of love. A wrong attitude often throws one vehemently against impossible situations until one has been mangled and destroyed. An example can be found in the American Indian and the American Negro. The Indian has never gracefully accepted his situation, but has lived in constant resentment, mental and emotional. The result is not good. His number has not increased while his state is little improved. This is not true of the American Negro. He was subjected to slavery and the deepest humiliation and is not yet altogether free from inequality and social injustice. However, he has laughed and sung his way up to better things and better conditions, while his race has increased in numbers. The difference? Attitude is the answer. One sits passive, more or less in resentment, while the other struggles up through his sorrow and poverty in quest of happiness, social and economic freedom. Attitude toward things, such as poverty, misfortune, disappointment, sickness, broken hearts, old age are full of destiny, but a right attitude toward personalities is far more vital than these. I wish people

would be all I expect of them, but if they will not, then I must make up for the situation by a right attitude on my part.

In conclusion, the principles of stewardship have an important place in these observations. To acknowledge our responsibility to others is essentially related to the whole realm of stewardship. These principles enter into all of our relations and attitudes. Our gifts and talents are not to be used for ourselves alone, but for others, who are to participate in the pleasures and profits accruing from such gifts. There is a service we owe to others, a service that is based upon two facts. First, my brother's needs and second, my ability to supply those needs. The incarnation of these principles in the life and conduct of certain men has given to them immortality. They stand today in the halls of fame and affection because they have incorporated in their lives these principles of stewardship.

Moses was offered wealth, fame, power, and pleasure, but renounced them all, preferring rather to suffer with the people of God in order to give his talents, life and influence in service to others.

Paul, the greatest man that ever lived, except Moses, the two being unquestionably the most outstanding characters in all history aside from Jesus Christ himself, is revered and honored in history because he saw the needs of his brother and spent his life in supplying those needs. He was a servant and steward, standing between God and man, giving to man his service and his life.

The needs of men are a challenge to us. Physical needs, mental needs, and religious needs make their tre-

mendous appeal. But what is my responsibility? Simply that I do my utmost, but no less. I cannot save every soul that is lost, of that I am keenly conscious; but I can save some and everyone that can be saved ought to be saved, and that is my responsibility. A quest for souls is my life occupation. The needs of souls and ability to supply those needs are the guiding facts in stewardship.

Giving oneself is the road to happiness, to usefulness, to greatness, and, what should not be forgotten, to fellowship with others.

Fellowship with others on a right basis is creative and cumulative. The more we give of our money, the less we will have, possibly, but the more we give of ourselves, the bigger, the richer and the more dynamic we become. To share our ideas, our affections, our information and ourselves will enlarge us and increase our wealth of character. Dynamic religion calls for propagation and communication with others. Self-expression in unselfish service is always creative and energizing. In this field, the more we give the more we have.

CHAPTER FOUR

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Belief in a divine being is not new. It is as old as the human race, being a universal expression of human nature. It is as natural for man to seek for a deity in which to place faith, as it is to breathe, and equally as necessary for normal life. Religion, which is the product of faith in some deity, has occupied an important place with every nation, people, and civilization throughout human history. It has been interlocked with the economic, social and educational life of every generation, and has played a prominent part in the rise and fall of civilizations and always will. Laws are passed at times forbidding any expression of religion, but this process is like throwing a dam across a mighty river. The dam will hold back the waters for a time, but finally the break will come. Belief in God may remain for a time unexpressed, but conditions will obtain that will certainly call out those suppressed religious passions.

Man is too big for this world. His stride is not that of an ordinary animal, but he has a destiny that will end far beyond the limits of the western skyline. He stands on the mountain peaks and with field glasses seeks a view of a land beyond the sea. Each achievement is a frontier from which he starts new expeditions. He looks for new conquests, demanded by his unsatisfied soul. Is he an animal? Yes, partly, but not wholly. He is connected with two worlds and must find satisfaction in both.

Man has aspirations that no mechanic philosophy can ever satisfy. He does not object to the use of machinery of a natural world for his accomplishments, but cannot be contented to make a materialism the end of his existence. The limitations of time and physical strength cut him off with unfulfilled ambitions, but this must not mark him for oblivion. No, man only begins here. He goes on forever. Moreover, he has a capacity that is so far extended, so high and so deep that all the material on earth can never fill his vast soul. Only God can do that.

This wonderful being not only has ability to fellowship those on his own level, but is capable of fellowship with personality above himself—God. Not only has he this capacity, but he desires to know and fellowship one above himself. Often men are lost in the fogs of mental and spiritual confusion and sin, or they are so preoccupied with the excitement and thrills of evil or of commonplace things that they crush this passion. But normally it is there and never satisfied until it finds rest in the presence of God.

One has said that if there were no God, man would be compelled to create one. There is a God, so there will be no necessity for the creation of some sort of fantastic god or religion. However the idea is suggestive, indeed, of an inner cry which demands to know and experience God. The most savage and uncivilized tribes found even in the remote depths of heathenism give proof of this demand of human nature. Those who have such highly developed egotism, having become so independent and wise in their own eyes as to feel that they can get along without God and religion; or have so saturated themselves in the

spirit of sin and sinful pleasure as to imagine themselves happy and contented without God, will some day find they have not followed their own real desires and nature, and must reap a harvest of disappointment and misery. The soul of man cannot rest without God unless it is kept in the grip of some interest or pleasurable excitement. The soul lifts its voice in supplication to God, but this voice is often hushed or lost in the confusion and clamors of a sinful world.

It is, therefore, sad that the normal hunger for God in us is often crushed. This interference may arise from voices about us crying for attention, or it might come from an inadequate or wrong conception of God.

It was my privilege to take a trip around the world, visiting such places as Japan, China, Philippine Islands, Malay States, India, Egypt, Palestine, Syria and a number of countries in Europe. This trip did three outstanding things for me. First, it confirmed some of my opinions. Second, it completely destroyed some. Third, it modified others. It is not possible here to enter into details concerning these impressions, but we desire to emphasize one question that presented itself to me and demanded an answer. The question is this: What are the differences, if any, between the different peoples of the earth? For example: What is the difference between the African and the Japanese; between the Englishman and the Chinese? There is a difference, or rather differences, many of them. To be more exact and definite, what is the fundamental difference? After all, this is the only thing of vital importance. This difference could not be one of color, for color is incidental, possibly of as little import-

ance as being a blond or brunette. To be white or tinted is incidental. The difference could not be one of brains.

No one can claim mental superiority for one people over another. It may be true that some have had better advantages and consequently possess a superior cultural background, but give the other an opportunity and he, too, will show mental ability. The color of the skin, climate, economic conditions, could not account for the differences found among the nations of the world. It is readily admitted that the white race has for a long time enjoyed the position of world leadership. How long can this leadership continue? No one can tell, but all know that this prestige and leadership and apparent superiority are now being seriously challenged by the tinted races. Why has the white race been honored with this position of advantage for so long? Again we ask the question, what is the fundamental difference between nations and even individuals? The one fundamental difference is *conception of God and attitude toward Him.* This in one word covers the ground, but might be enlarged upon for emphasis and enlightenment.

A large part of the human race believes in pantheism, which means that God is diffused in everything, and everything put together is God. In other words, God is exhausted in the creation of the world, and the world of nature and natural law explains the whole of God. This conception sets aside all idea of personality of God and finally, of man. The results are not hard to find in the people who hold to this false belief. They are gripped by fatalism, by false claims of necessity, and are slaves to fear, pessimism, and hopelessness. The inspiration of in-

dividualism is impossible among them. They are lost in a maze of a universe without meaning or objective.

On the other hand, millions of human beings without the knowledge of the living God worship gods that are a mixture of good and evil. Their deities have fusses among themselves, commit crimes, indulge in all forms of lust and passion, while at other times they possess great and outstanding virtues. These people have gods that are not entirely good nor entirely evil, but a mixture of the two. What is the result? Their conception of God will be the ideals and standards for themselves, both as to character and moral ethics. They, too, will be good and bad, having some virtues and many vices. People will never rise above their conception of their religion and of their God. This explains the leadership of the white race. Its conception of God has been superior. It has had the Bible, with its marvelous revelation of God to man and of man's duty to God and man's duty to man. This doctrine of God, conception of God, and attitude toward God have lifted the white race to a place of importance, of prestige, and of power.

Sad to say, the influence of doubt, unbelief, evolution, mechanistic thought, are being felt and the process of weakening is going on and the future of the white race is not so certain. Let him change his conception of the true and living God, and alter his attitude toward his God and the race with its leadership and power will end as surely as time lasts. Conception of God and attitude toward Him are central and basic. Everything else is determined by them.

This truth will bear application to the individual, as well as to any social group, small or large. Why is one man in a community so different from another? Fundamentally, it is not his blood, his education, altogether, or his natural temperament. The difference can be traced to his attitude toward and conception of God. I know a man who is a legalist, hard, unsympathetic, exacting toward others, unforgiving, and yet professes a very high state of divine grace. What makes him like this, even with his profession of religion? If you could enter into his thinking, you would find that he looks upon God merely as a sovereign, a ruler, who is unyielding, austere, and almost unforgiving. He does not see a tender, kind, patient, long-suffering, merciful heavenly Father. His God is a king, without the feelings of a parent.

Here is another man who is just the opposite, tender, kind and willing to overlook shortcomings in others. This man sees God as full of love and sympathetic in his solicitude toward broken-hearted and wrecked humanity.

But we cannot stop with this conception; we must also include attitude. It is possible for one to possess a right conception of God and still refuse to assume an attitude of submission, obedience, and love. Both are necessary and the two together determine the outcome of every life.

If this is true (and it is) how carefully and conscientiously should one guard his attitude toward and conception of God! What are we doing to create in the minds of men a right idea of God? How much of our gospel really reveals God to the mind and lays a right foundation for confidence, obedience and love? What

are we doing to give our children right ideas of God? Do we begin early, even in the kindergarten years, and work day and night, year in and year out to this end? It is hardly possible to overemphasize the importance of ethics, right living, right conduct, but are these possible unless they are superinduced and backed by a right conception of God?

Much is spoken and written about faith, but not too much. Faith is important, so important as to be the one and only condition of salvation. All others, such as repentance, restitution, consecration, are merely prerequisites to the one condition, which is faith. Our ministers often indirectly accuse and condemn people for not having more faith, but are they to blame? Is it possible that the fault lies at the door of an inadequate and ineffective ministry, failing to portray a right conception of God, which is the foundation for faith?

Three things are essential to faith, namely: an idea that God exists; a right conception of God; and a proper attitude toward Him. Without these it is impossible to believe, but with them it is almost impossible to doubt.

If I am to believe God, He must be such a being as to inspire faith and confidence. That God is such a being no one will question. But there is another essential, a right understanding and conception of this faithful and dependable God. Even this is not enough. The third thing is needed, namely, a proper attitude toward Him. These three are essential to faith. The first essential is not questioned, for God is all we can ask or desire, but our conception of God can certainly be improved upon,

and our attitude toward Him should be carefully investigated.

Christian civilization is built upon two impregnable principles. First, faith in God, and second, belief in the dignity of man. Destroy these two principles and civilization is doomed. Give them a rightful place and civilization becomes indestructible. The strength of a nation is not in its armies, its battleships, guns, or other death dealing weapons of war; but in the character of its citizenship, the character of its average man and woman. The ability of the government to pay its obligations can be determined by the ability of the average citizen walking our streets to pay taxes. The manhood of the ordinary citizen is the strength of the nation or the lack of it is its weakness.

Manhood is built on the two things mentioned above —faith in God and belief in the dignity of man. No one denies the latter, but many are sadly inclined to forget the first. But do not forget that the second is impossible without the first. Without faith in God no one can believe in the dignity of man. The dignity of man has been given great emphasis in an endeavor to lift him into a position of a sort of deity, but the dignity of man is merely mockery and buffoonery without faith in God. If man is an animal, having come from nothing and is to return to nothing, why talk of his greatness and of his dignity? If man is an animal and has no God and will perish in death, why worry about good or evil, or sin or holiness, or right or wrong? If we are to live only a few years and then pass into eternal oblivion, why worry about human rights and social justice? If there is no God to meet after death,

to whom we are to give an account, why worry about law and justice? If there is no God to deal out justice after death, then why not get justice here at any cost, regardless of others and of their rights?

Without God, man is stripped of all of his dignity and becomes a mere groveling animal, rising from nothing and destined to pass into nothing. It is utterly impossible to hold man in high esteem if he is only an animal, having no God; or if he is only a spontaneous generation into something from nothing and already headed back to his origin—nothing. We repeat, destroy belief in God and the dignity of man is automatically destroyed. With these two gone the foundation of civilization crumbles into ruin.

Why the lawlessness, the crime, the breakdown of our present order of things, social and economic? It is due to two things—lack of belief in God and in the dignity of man. With God ruled out of existence and with man only a poor dying animal, without a soul, how can we have respect for law, for government, or for one another? This lawless condition has been brought about by any and all agencies that have contributed to the destruction of belief in God, and have depreciated the greatness of man as a being of divine origin and consequently of eternal value.

What, then, should be our conception of God? May we note, briefly, some ideas of God that are vital and true; ideas that should be clear, fresh, and abiding?

(1). God is a person. This is a simple and brief statement, but one that lies at the center of philosophic discussion and investigation, and is the source of much controversy. The doctrine of the personality of God is

not new, but is found among the oldest beliefs and conceptions of men. Possibly this is due to the fact that man, himself, is a person and can reach a conception of God best through a conception of himself. Being himself a person, it is natural for him to think of God as a person, also. This idea is not strained, but normal. If men did not force their heads out of their natural orbits they would never question that God is a person. Having the faculty of personality, one naturally and normally looks for personality in God.

God is conscious of Himself and knows perfectly the meaning of His own being; He has power of self-expression through His own acts and deeds and has ability to relate Himself to other persons, and capacity to enjoy fellowship with other personalities. God is a person.

The incarnation is a glorious revelation of this truth. Jesus is God in flesh and a person, born of a Virgin, living among men. He suffers and dies. God could best reveal Himself to man through the incarnation, for man could best understand God through human contacts and human conceptions. Every reasonable conception that man can have of God leads right back to the doctrine of divine personality. We like to think of God as being ethical and moral, but there could be no ethics, no morals without personality. We cannot think of the ocean or winds or gravitation or electricity as being ethical, nor can we ascribe ethics to animals. Ethics and morals apply to persons and these only.

(2). Then we like to think of God as good, but goodness itself can hardly be considered in the abstract. We must conceive of goodness in relationships. This calls

for personality, which possesses intelligence, volition, and a sense of right and wrong. If God is good, His acts are ethical and just and merciful. Not only that, but if good, He is unselfish, always seeking the highest good and happiness of others. Thus, the goodness of God takes us naturally into the realm of acts, deeds, relationships, unselfish service. Thus, if God is a good God, and our soul claims that He is, He must be a personal God as well.

(3). Any right conception of God demands that He be holy, for we could not respect an unholy and sinful God. How could I worship one who is on a low moral level? One who is unholy? That is utterly unthinkable. True, I might worship such a God through fear, but not with admiration, respect and love. Any worship of the higher order must be based upon holiness in God. He must be such a being as to draw out my sense of respect and spirit of worship.

(4). The soul of man demands a wise God, one who is infallible, above mistakes and errors, one who is perfect in knowledge, wisdom and judgment. We realize that from beginning of life to its end we are bewildered with problems too big for us, and must seek help from some extraneous source, and we demand help from a source of wisdom that is perfect. When we pray for help from God, we are sure that He never errs, and whatever He wills for us is best. He is not only good and holy, therefore without sin, but He is wise, so that He is capable at all times of giving us the best and without mistakes.

Belief in the wisdom of God will settle many a battle, especially in the life of young people. Why does God call a young man to the ministry who desires to be an attorney?

Why does He demand that a young woman be a missionary and give up the fondest hopes of home, wifehood, and motherhood? This is questioning not only the goodness of God, but His wisdom. God cannot harm us, for His own goodness forbids. And He cannot injure us by mistake, for He is infallible, perfect in wisdom and judgment. Therefore, whatever He selects for one's life is not only best for the person himself, but for the whole world, as well. This understanding of God removes friction and makes one less resistant to the calls and commissions of the Holy Spirit and puts into life a radiance of romance.

(5). We like to think of God as one who loves. "God so loved the world that he gave." This is the whole story in one word. God is a person, He is good and holy and wise and the greatest and the most unselfish lover the world has ever known. To speak of God as love in the abstract is mere nonsense. There are intelligent people who hold to this senseless doctrine of a God of love, who is entirely impersonal. But how can there be love with no one to exercise this passion? How can there be love without a lover? The very conception of love implies both a lover and an object of love, both of which could not be anything less than personality itself.

(6). Again, a right conception of God demands that He be powerful and able to meet every situation that can arise under His sovereign and moral government. Then the soul can rest in peace while in His possession and under His sovereign will.

In summary, He is too good to harm us; He is holy and cannot sin; He is worthy of admiration and worship and a fit example for everyone's character and life; He

is wise and therefore above mistakes, perfect in all of His decisions and mental decrees; He is a God of love, who feels for men and is more concerned for them than a tender mother could ever be for her child.

He is able to execute in our behalf every plan conceived by His goodness, His holiness, His wisdom and His love. Many times have friends spoken words as follows: I would like to help you but I cannot. A friend may be good and pure and even to some extent wise, but he is surrounded with so many limitations and handicaps as to be unable to execute his deepest desire for us. But this is not true of God. His power extends to the farthest limits of my necessities.

Oh, that we might have a right conception of God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. To see Jesus and to know Him is to see and know the Father.

There is one basic principle which permeates the whole of this conception of God, that is, His social nature which desires fellowship with man. The Trinity is a most beautiful indication of the social nature in God. God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost—three persons in one, living in perfect unity, agreement and fellowship. This is the true picture of God with a social nature. His social nature goes out beyond Himself and seeks to take man into its circle of fellowship and sympathetic understanding.

Creation is another indication of the social nature of God. Why did God make man with all the dangers and implications here involved? In the Garden of Eden God walked with man and all through the centuries He has

sought contacts with him. These facts stand high in the records of divine dealings with humanity.

Man's ability to know and to fellowship God forcefully indicates this. In man there is intelligence, conscience, feelings of moral responsibility, free agency, power to be good or to be evil, to be holy or to be unholy. Animals have no power either to be sinful or holy. They can be neither good nor bad. They can do neither right nor wrong in a moral sense. Man is different. He is of a higher order and capable of fellowship with his Creator.

God definitely seeks relationship with people and has given man ample power to reciprocate. There is a wonderful picture in the New Testament which we would like to lift up to the view of every reader. Jesus tells of three men to whom talents were given, and to each was committed a task to be performed while the Master was on a trip in a far country. When the day of reckoning came, the three men stood before the Master and were called forward one at a time to give an account. The first one—the one to whom five talents had been given—gladly and boldly informed the Master of his success and in proof of his achievements presented to his Master not only the original five talents, but five additional ones. Likewise the second, with two talents, came forward and presented to his Master the increase. But the third—the one having only one talent—began to make excuses and by implication to accuse his Master of cruelty and severity. This slothful servant and unprofitable, was bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness, in the midst of wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Years ago, when I read this parable, my mind reacted unfavorably, for I felt that in some way the Master had been harsh in the punishment given the unfaithful servant. I told myself that it must be all right, because the story was in the Bible, but my mind refused to accept the conclusion of the story. The only crime of which he was accused was the crime of unfaithfulness in that he had buried his Lord's talent. What was there about this man that made him deserve such extreme condemnation?

One day it occurred to me that I should make further investigation, that my interpretation of the entire picture might be distorted. Naturally, I would like to know what the one talent is that might be common to all men. I found my answer in the writing of a great author, who explained, and to my satisfaction, that the one talent, the common talent, is the ability possessed by personality to know God and the capacity to enjoy His fellowship. This, he explained, is the end of man, to know, to enjoy, and to glorify God. If man fails at this point he has missed the very reason for his creation and existence and has committed an almost unforgivable crime against himself, against all other human beings, and against his Creator. To turn away from God, therefore, is man's blackest sin and, consequently, deserves the severest condemnation.

One day a friend stood in front of me, looking straight into my face, and asked, "Brother Williams, why did Jesus Christ die on the cross? What was the object of His death?" That was a fair question and very significant. He asked me not to preach a sermon to him, for he did not have time nor desire to listen to one. In one simple statement he wanted the reason for the death of Christ,

the final reason, the supreme reason. At first I was bewildered. I knew many reasons, I thought, for the coming of Jesus Christ and His death on the cross, but this man wanted one, only one, and he wanted that to be the final one. I began the process of mental elimination, feeling for a central truth, for a final word. "The object of the atonement is to bring man into fellowship with God," was my reply.

The doctrine of the atonement is deep and mysterious, and has been the object of more discussion than almost any other subject in Christian thought. But why the atonement? One has said it is God's method of upholding the dignity of the law and yet extending mercy to the lawbreaker. But in the last analysis, the reason was that God desired to find a way to re-establish a broken fellowship with man. He could have upheld the dignity of His government by casting man aside, for man had forfeited his rights to divine favor, but this could not satisfy the heart of God. He loves man and longs for a restored fellowship with him.

The incarnation is a glorious revelation—the greatest ever given. The atonement is a revelation of the feelings of God for the sinner. It is evidence that our heavenly Father desires the lost sinner and seeks for his return to the divine embrace. It reveals the feelings of God toward sin, which is so terrible as to demand death as its penalty. God gave His only begotten Son to die, the just for the unjust, satisfying justice, and opening the way for mercy.

There is a story of a king, an absolute monarch, who passed a certain law, the penalty for breaking which was

the putting out of the eyes of the offender. The first one to break the law was the prince, the king's own son. The king and father was heartbroken. His position was tragic. He was a ruler and lawmaker, at the same time he was a father and loved his son more than he loved his own life. As ruler it was necessary to uphold the dignity of his law and thus to preserve his sovereignty over his people. His own love for his son demanded mercy. How could he protect the dignity of his government and at the same time extend mercy to his own son, the one who had broken his law? To put out the eyes of the prince would be almost too much for the father's heart to endure. He sought for a solution and found one. He conceived the idea of putting out one of the eyes of his son and one of his own eyes. In doing this he would give evidence to his subjects that he respected the dignity of his sovereignty, and at the same time would open the way to extend mercy to his own son, whom he dearly loved. In this solution he himself would suffer, and his son would suffer, but the dignity of government would be preserved, mercy would be extended, and fellowship restored between himself and his own son. The plan worked.

This is an imperfect illustration, but throws some light upon the subject under consideration. God loves humanity, but humanity is a lawbreaker and the punishment for breaking the laws of God is death. God gave His Son to die, the righteous for the unrighteous, and in doing this He has saved the glory of His government and has extended mercy to every sinner of Adam's race.

The atonement reveals the love of God. Nothing else could. We could not know that God loves us because He

feeds, clothes, and gives to us all of the necessities of life, but His suffering, His death, His atonement reveals a love that tends to break the human heart through a revelation of God's love in the person of Jesus Christ. The atonement is an exposition of God's love to dying humanity.

The atonement is God's great drawing power to bring wandering and lost men back to Himself. Nothing touches the heart of man like the sufferings and death of Jesus. Law has its place, the gospel offers its rewards, they have their appeal, and the fear of punishment is a deterrent and possibly an inducement, but man can set up resistance to these far more easily than he can to the heart-breaking appeal that comes through the unselfishness and the sufferings of Jesus Christ revealing God. "When I am lifted up," says Jesus, "I will draw all men unto me." This gospel is the most powerful influence the world has ever felt.

All of this is to bring about a state of fellowship between God and man. This is final—the end—the great objective. This challenge from God is enough to break the hardest and the most indifferent heart.

Right relationship with God is possible only on a right basis. This relationship means more than a mental assent or decision. It goes deeper than church ordinances or membership or conformity to creeds. Religion is more than a creed—it is a life. It deals with personality more than with conformity to doctrines, principles, or ethical ideals. Relationship with God is conformity in character; human character becoming consonant with the divine.

When two persons are related in unity, conformity, co-operation, and sympathetic understanding, they have grounds for relationship. There must be some points of equality for abiding relationship. In the case of God and man, either God must come down to man's level, or else man must be brought up to a higher plane. It is obvious that God cannot lower Himself to our accommodation. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He cannot change and no human heart desires Him to do so, for He is exactly like we want Him to be. He is the standard, always perfect, complete, and infinite. We are fallen and must be lifted from the lower to the higher, from darkness to light, from sin to holiness, from death to eternal life. God is our offer, our ideal, our standard, yea, our command!

Thus, to be properly related to God we must incorporate these two essentials, namely: first, a community of interests, and secondly, a community of character. In what is God interested? This is one test. We must be interested in everything that concerns Him and turn our backs upon everything that is repulsive to His nature. What of His character? Is He good? Then men must be good. Is He holy? Then we must be holy. Does He love? Then we must love everybody, even our enemies. Is God just to others? Then we must incorporate the principle of justice in our actions and attitudes toward our neighbor. Is He merciful and gracious? Then we must be kind and gracious to everyone. Does He love holiness? Then we must love and promote holiness in ourselves and in others. Does He hate sin? Then we must hate sin and spend our efforts trying to destroy it. Does He give Himself

for others to serve them? If so, then we must follow His example. God's interests must be ours and His character must be our standard.

Above all, in this similarity of character, we must recognize that God is holy, and commands us to be holy. Why this command and demand? Simply because there is no other basis to character that is abiding, and since God cannot be otherwise than holy, we must seek to be like Him in order to live with Him forever in personal fellowship. When man came from the hand of his Creator, he was as pure and holy as an infinite God could make him. To deny this is to charge God with sin, which would be unkind, unscriptural, and unreasonable. Holiness is the state from which man fell, and therefore is man's normal, natural state. Is it not strange reasoning that a man is abnormal and unnatural just because he claims to be holy? What strange logic! Is a man with tuberculosis in his lungs a normal man physically? Is one with traces of insanity normal mentally? Is one with sin in his nature normal spiritually? There is but one possible answer to these questions. A body to be normal and natural must be free from disease; a mind to be normal must be free from every trace of insanity; a soul to be normal and natural must be free from the leprosy of sin. To be free physically from all disease; to be free mentally from all insanity, and to be free spiritually from all sin is to be natural and normal in a threefold way. Holiness is a necessity, for God is holy.

Right relationship with God is far-reaching in its importance and results. It extends into all the phases of one's life, fundamentally and incidentally, solving many

problems which otherwise would remain forever unsolved. It gives life a center, which is essential to a well ordered and successful one; prevents the eccentricities, the side lines, and the blind alleys in which many a career has tragically ended. It holds up an objective and furnishes the dynamics and life forces to fight for it. It lops off many foolish and nonsensical things from one's plans. It eliminates much excess baggage.

Right relationship with God is fundamental, not something that can be attended to or let alone. It is not only fundamental within itself, but to other things as well. Until this relationship is made and made rightly, no other adjustment is possible in its highest and safest degree. No reasonable person will question the wisdom of right relationship with things, but this is impossible without a right relationship with God. Everyone will admit that we should and must rightly relate ourselves to people in order to make the most of life, and yet this, too, is impossible without a right relationship with God. God in our affections, in our conscience, in our will, in our plans, in our deeds, is the great energizing force that superinduces all else in life that is worth while.

How inexplicable it is that intelligent men and women will put God on the side line, relegate Him, humiliate Him and grieve Him. For He is their best friend and the only friend who is able to aid them in making their own lives rich and full and successful. Jesus Christ should never be looked upon as a command. He is more than a command; He is a challenge, an offer. He came, not to do His own will, nor to harm anyone, but to do His Fa-

ther's will and to give men something that is priceless, yes, to give Himself.

Right relationship with God results in happiness of a real sort. The man without God fools himself into thinking he is happy. He may enjoy a degree of contentment, some thrills and some happiness, but what happiness he has comes from a wrong source. One has said, and that very wisely, that the sinner is happy through what he can forget; while the Christian is happy because of what he knows. What a difference! One is happy only when he can forget; while the other is happy on the basis of what he knows and can remember. The sinner must forget that he is wrong with God. He must forget that he is neglecting the highest relationship possible to man. He must forget that he is on the wrong road. He must forget that he is facing inevitable death. He must forget that a day of reckoning awaits him. To fail in this forgetting process, is to bring misery upon himself. He must forget. He cannot live one day of contentment without it. His happiness is possible only to the extent to which he can keep himself so preoccupied and interested as to forget life's weightier and more fundamental matters.

The man who walks with God is different. He is happy, not because of what he can forget, but because of what he knows. He knows he is acquiring the highest relationship of which he is capable. He knows that he is doing his duty in relationship to things. He knows that he is trying to adjust himself to people and to fulfill the laws of moral obligation in this personal relationship. He knows there is a hand of Providence over him day and night. He knows that his heavenly Father is making

wise plans for him in this world and in the next one. He knows that death does not end all. He knows that after death he can meet his God in peace. He knows that he can enjoy eternal fellowship with those who have gone on before him and are waiting for him. He knows that he can live forever with God in understanding, in love, and eternal fellowship. His happiness does not consist in things that thrill him while he forgets, but rather in those things upon which he can think and harbor in his heart in the still hours of the night. This man is looking toward a city whose maker and builder is God. What a difference! The happiness of the first man comes from a wrong source, a source that must soon end, while the happiness of the second comes from a right source, one that will never end.

No one feels truly the thrills of romance until he is rightly related to God. The carpenter, the plumber, the sculptor, the artist, the musician, the farmer, the preacher, the doctor, the lawyer—everyone can and should find romance in his occupation or profession. This, however, is impossible without a right relationship with God.

This higher relationship puts romance into all others. It puts into the thoughts and activities of life the principles and feelings of the steward, that he is serving God and working for Him in all of his relationships. The man with a right relationship with God makes Him the center of his life, while the man without this relationship must necessarily make self the center of his life. The first relationship leads up and on, while the second leads inward and downward. This relationship prepares one for

all the emergencies of life and of these there are many; and they are inevitable.

In Los Angeles years ago a certain denomination was in a General Conference. One Sunday morning one of the senior bishops, a man dearly beloved and revered by his denomination, was in charge of an old-time love feast. Among those who arose to speak was an elderly preacher 84 years of age, by whose side stood his wife 82. The dear old saint nearing the borderland of eternity reviewed the blessings of God that had been so lavishly and magnanimously poured upon him all these years. He ended his testimony with a shout, as he leaped up and down as much as his age and strength would permit. When he sat down his aged wife spoke these few words: "Bishop, I feel just like John is acting," and with this statement she, too, sat down, while the great audience burst into tears of holy joy. The bishop arose and said, "Brothers and sisters, I want to call your attention to the fact that the devil has no happy old people." His implication covered the other side of the case. Yes, God has many happy old people, but the devil has none.

When the face is old and wrinkled, it does not have much beauty unless it reflects the light of immortal glory shining upon it from the eternal city, toward which it steadfastly looks.

Right relationship with God is pre-eminently our highest achievement. It has been stated in this discussion repeatedly that our entire life is spent in forming relationships, or that life consists of relationships, of which there are only three: relationship with things, with people, and with God. We present them in this order because of their

relative importance: things being of least importance, people next, and God taking supreme position. No sane mind will for a moment attempt to minimize the value of being rightly related to things material, and likewise to people, but at the same time some will treat with utter unconcern the highest relationship of all, with God. To neglect either of the three is to live an incomplete life, and, too, is a reflection upon one's highest intelligence. Some are foolish enough to work themselves into a feeling of importance over the fact they have been able to set aside one of these relationships, living without it. Look at the results! To miss the first is to fail in the mastery of a material world. To fail in the second is to have little influence with one's fellowmen, to get little real happiness out of life and to commit crime against one's own personality, as well as against others. To miss the third is to miss orientating toward the stars and God. To fail in the last is not only a blunder for this life, but a tragedy that is eternal. To live threescore years and ten without God and religion is sad and tragic, but to die without knowing how to die and to meet God without knowing how to meet Him, to pass into another world utterly unfitted for the trip, is an eternal blunder.

How may we become rightly related to God? This is a fair question and deserves some attention.

(1). It is necessary to give God a rightful place in one's thinking. Once more we wish to mention the determining factor in every person's life, namely, his ability to distinguish between what is important and what is not; between what is fundamental and that which is incidental. The rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews constitutes the

darkest chapter in their national and racial history. The Son of God came to them and was treated with every indignity, even to the humiliation of death on a cross. Jesus was born among animals in a manger, lived in poverty, and died shamefully, to the everlasting disgrace of the Jews. This vividly gives us an outstanding example of a case where a people did not recognize their greatest opportunity. The Jews have suffered for this treatment of Jesus and will do so forever. The sad fact in this example is a closed mind; the fact that they would not give Him a place in their thoughts. This was the cause of the other tragic events connected with His life and death. Jesus found no place in their minds.

The Jews are not the only ones guilty of this sin. Other intelligent men are guilty of placing Jesus Christ outside of their thinking, being too busy with business, pleasure and other things. No man will or can relate himself rightly with God until he consents to give Him a place of weighty consideration in his thought life. This is the first step.

(2). One must desire it. Serious thought usually gives birth to desire. The heart is reached through the power of attention and affections are sustained by it. The will affects and controls love indirectly through attention. No man can think on God, His personality, His goodness, His holiness, His love, His wisdom and His attitude toward one without being influenced. Desire for God will become as certain as the thinking process of the mind. When one desires he usually takes other steps, steps that may lead to the satisfying of that desire.

(3). One must be willing to conform to the will of God and to be consonant with divine character. That involves the rejection of sin, in order to be whole-heartedly in possession of holiness. Conformity to divine will and character is rightly relating oneself to God, and this requires not only attention and desire, but the definite, specific and determined action of the will.

(4). One must assume a right attitude toward God. Here again we face our own personal responsibility. How many people have we met across the years who were just sitting and waiting for God to act, to give them deep conviction, and stir them with feelings that would be well-nigh irresistible. They assumed an attitude that borders on fatalism or utter defeatism.

God has offered His salvation, but we must accept the offer. The gift is presented, but must be accepted by an agent who is intelligent enough and responsible enough to treat the offer with proper respect. Let us repeat a statement already made in this book, namely, that faith is attitude in effect, if not in fact. Attitude in this definition is rich in implications, too many to mention and discuss here. This attitude is not passive or indifferent but active, positive, interested, obedient, aggressive, and receptive. Regardless of our conception of faith, we have no faith without a right attitude toward God, but with a right attitude, faith may be present for results that are within the will of God.

A right attitude is in effect co-operation with God and His plans, both relating to our own salvation and to the salvation of others. It cannot be too often stated that

salvation has two sides, namely, the human and the divine, man's part and God's part. No man will ever be lost if he co-operates with God in His plans and efforts. When one assumes a proper attitude toward divine law, divine will, divine plans, he himself cannot go wrong, but the responsibility is his and must be so recognized.

One can sit in the darkness of his room, perishing for sunlight and praying for the angels to come down from heaven and open his window; but relief will never come until one does his own part, opening the window and permitting his own prayers to be answered. God has provided bread for all men, but co-operation must be given on our part to make this provision effective. The fool smiled and said, "I shall not plant wheat this year. I will just depend upon fate or Providence. God is too good to let me starve." But God will let this foolish man perish unless co-operation is given. Abundant seed, soil, moisture, sunlight, machinery, animal power, and intelligence have been given for the tilling of the land, but man must co-operate if he is to receive bread.

A right attitude will make effective the promises of God. Every promise given to man is conditional. This fact places the ultimate benefits of the promises squarely at the door of human responsibility. What shall be our attitude toward these promises? This is not a doctrine of fatalism, but confidence in a person, faith in a divine personality. This faith, attitude as I like to think of it, is not perhaps some unusual gift, but rather an attitude that we can and must assume toward God. No improvement is needed upon what God has done provisionally for us,

but all can improve upon the attitude we take. Attitude is not some blessing to be sought and found at an altar of prayer. We have much to do with the creation of our own attitudes, and cannot escape responsibility for the attitudes we have.

The glory of a right relationship with God is found in its endlessness. After fortunes have dissipated, health has gone, friends have disappeared, life has ebbed away, and the sun has set on our short lives here, we can go on and on in fellowship with God in another world forever.

What happiness lies easily within our reach! We have the ability to adjust ourselves here and now to things, to people, and to God; and do it so as to make the most of life for ourselves, for others, and to reflect glory upon the name of our Creator and Savior. How much life holds in store for us and yet how poverty-stricken the most of us are because we do not assume a proper attitude toward God and His storehouse of limitless blessings.

A passenger train stopped at the station, people were getting off and on, while the trainmen were loading and unloading mail and luggage. Suddenly there came from the station a man running toward the engine, holding in his hand a telegram, which he gave to the engineer standing at the side of his great locomotive. This engineer read the message, then quickly climbed into his cab, placed his hand upon his throttle, and waited impatiently for the signal to go. The message he had just read had come from his home and stated that his wife had become suddenly ill and was dying. The train at its next stop would

be at his home—the end of his run. When the signal came from the conductor, the train started with a sudden jerk, and soon passed the limits of safety in its speed. The conductor, sensing that something was wrong and knowing that the train was breaking all speed limits, tried by signals to slow down the train, but to no avail. He decided to warn the passengers of impending danger. The people became frightened and sat in fear and dread of a wreck. One child in the train did not react to the warning as others had done. She, a little girl of about twelve summers, sat at the window looking out and singing. The conductor, noticing her smiles and lack of fear and hearing her cheerful voice in song, touched her shoulder and said, "Little girl, are you not afraid? Did you not hear what I said, that the engineer is evidently drunk or insane or dead and that we are in danger of death, all of us?" "Yes, Mr. Conductor, I heard what you said, but the man you are talking about is my daddy and as long as he runs this train I am not afraid." Here was confidence, trust, faith, not in an unknown force, but in a living person. The child had a trustful attitude toward her daddy, which created a relationship between herself and her father that resulted in relaxation and trust. Thus, as long as God operates the universe, and He is my Father, nothing shall bring fear or distress to my life.

God is everything that we need. The revelation that we have of Him through the Old and New Testaments, reaching its climax in Jesus Christ, satisfies every demand of human intelligence and human feelings. God is everything we need and is exactly like we want Him. We would not have Him different if we could. He is perfect both in

character and conduct. Why should we not have confidence in Him? He is able, He is willing and ready to be our best and truest friend now and forever. A right attitude toward Him will result in a right relationship with Him, which is a supreme achievement in this world and the next.

School of Theology
at Claremont
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